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TOWARD UNDERSTANDING THE BEGINNING EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOLING FOR THREE KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN

by

© OGSOON SHIN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1986

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled TOWARD UNDERSTANDING THE BEGINNING EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOLING FOR THREE KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN submitted by OGSOON SHIN in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

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Date June 20, 1986

Dedication

To My Parents

I dedicate this study to my father who has devoted his whole life to awakening the young generation, and to my mother who has disclosed the profound meaning of being a mother through her acts.

Abstract

When children reach five years of age, most of them have experienced some form of schooling in contemporary society, regardless of their own intentions. These children are expected to leave their familiar home environment and adjust to a different culture, the classroom, where there are a variety of new restrictions and regulations. What is it like for young children to go to school? What meanings do they give to their experience? This study was proposed to seek an understanding of children's own rich and lived experiences as a whole, instead of identifying general tendencies or developing propositions to explain observable or measurable behaviors.

In order to unfold the deep meaning structure of schooling for young children, I entered into the concrete life-worlds of three Korean children as they entered kindergarten in September, 1985. During the period from August to December of that year, I participated in their world by talking with their parents, observing and sensing their real actions and feelings in the classroom, and having occasional conversations with them. In order to understand their experiences in a wider context, I tried to get assistance from other sources such as the pictures they drew, the teacher's comments, photographs, and so forth.

As I delved into the deep meanings of three children's life-worlds, I tried to re-tell their experiences of beginning schooling with the vividness they lived through. On the basis of their lived experiences, I attempted to let significant themes emerge as they related to educational concerns and practices. The themes identified were: 'I have long leg' (feeling of grown-up); 'I did nothing' ('nothing' as it related to school activities); 'Where are we going?' (loss of self in the time schedule and evaluative criteria); 'Can you hold my hand?' (wanting to be affiliated with and noticed by other classmates); and 'She is nice' (the teacher is nice).

In the final chapter, my experience of the act of understanding, which is central in this study, is reflected upon as I experienced through this study in order to deepen the act of understanding in further efforts to understand children's worlds. In our efforts to improve educational practice, an attempt to search for the proper place of children in educational practice is made. Finally an education for children is suggested and discussed with relation to the notion of pedagogical tactfulness and *wu-wei*.

Acknowledgement

There are many individuals whose help and support contributed to the completion of this study. To them, I wish to return the merit of this study.

First, I would like to express my special thanks to my supervisory committee; professor Janis Blakey, as supervisor, and professors Lorene Everett-Turner and Mary Young. Throughout the process of this study professor Lorene Everett-Turner has supported me with valuable advice. Professor Mary Young helped me open my eyes to the world of cultural anthropolgy as well as an alternative way of understanding the rich world of children.

Professor Janis Blakey was not only my academic supervisor but a true mentor in my life in Canada. Since I began to study in Canada, she has guided me in my academic pursuance as well as in aspects of my personal life. Her thoughtful advice based on her deep understanding of the study and of me were especially encouraging.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to professors Peggie Platt, Jim Parsons and Keith McLeod as members of the examining committee. Professor Peggie Platt's deep understanding of the study and thoughtful advice were encouraging and supportive. Professor Jim Parsons's reflective questions provided me with a greater self-understanding of my study and served as a guide for my

future efforts. The participation of professor Keith McLeod as the external examiner was especially gratifying. His profound questions and insightful reflections were transformative.

I cannot forget my appreciation to the three children of this study, Jason, Ricky, and Sam who invited me to their rich and infinite world of experiencing schooling and to their families. My special thanks go to the teachers of Moonlight and Geoffery school for their sincere cooperation and support during the study.

Finally, this study could not have been completed without the loving care and support of my family. I am especially grateful to my husband who was always willing to discuss and challenge my ideas. My four-year-old daughter, Hyun Jung, also deserves my heartfelt thanks for her patient understanding and acceptance of my frequent absences.

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I. Introduction

A. Background to the Research

> The cultural pattern of the approached group is to the stranger not a shelter but a field of adventure, not a matter of course but a questionable topic of investigation, not an instrument for disentangling problematic situation but a problematic situation itself and one hard to master (Schutz, 1971, P. 104).

While sitting here reflecting on the first days of sending my daughter, Jane, to the daycare center, I vividly remember the heart-rendering feeling of leaving her as she was choking, crying, and struggling to free herself from the teacher behind me. After beginning her daycare life, she would wake at mid-night and cry. This was something which never had happened before. She refused to eat anything at the daycare as well as at home. This experience led me as a mother and a student who is interested in early childhood education, to ponder one question in my mind. What is it like for young children to be left in an unfamiliar environment and with strange people? When young children are separated from their parents and required to adjust to new ways of life, what feelings and meanings are they experiencing?

Almost all the children in contemporary society are expected to have some form of 'schooling' when they are approximately five years of age. At this time, they may experience a strange environment, a different organization, and unfamiliar people. For the first time, they may be cut

off from the familiarity and security of the home culture for a length of time for five days a week. In addition, there are many restrictions and regulations they must follow in a schooling society (Jackson, 1968). They have to go to school every morning at the fixed time. They have to share play materials with other classmates. They have to conform to the teacher's authority which may be a different kind of power from their parent's (Dreeben 1968; LeCompte 1978). These going-to-school experiences at around age five may be a traumatic and critical event for young children in their life.

Schutz (1971) speaks of "strangeness and familiarity" as general categories of our interpretation of the world. According to Schutz, when a stranger encounters a new situation which is unknown and which therefore "stands out of the ordinary order of his knowledge" (P. 105), his/her previous way of thinking, "thinking-as-usual" which was brought from his home group, becomes unworkable. What is it like to be a stranger? Aceves (1974) shows a vivid example of this feeling, expressing that:

> Culture shock is waking one morning and wondering. "What the hell am I doing here?" It is having negative reactions to customs and practices you do not know, and cannot understand. In a part, it is homesickness, not just for a place but for a way of life. It is psychological and sometimes physiological reaction to being alone in a strange place, not knowing what to do. It is feeling outraged about being surrounded by a bunch of damned foreigners whose reactions are not predictable in terms of the researcher's own culture (pp. 82-83).

For the children, as young strangers who approach the new situation of kindergarten, what is it really like to encounter the unfamiliar circumstance of schooling? What is the real world of being in the classroom for the first time? How do they go through this reality in their own process of inquiry? For example, what is it like for a child who really needs someone to comfort his/her emotional distress or insecurities, but who must wait until it is his/her turn to have the teacher's attention and support? This kind of reality may not be common in the child's home culture. Even the teacher's supportive caring manner may be much different from their parents'. The physical environment of the school setting might also offer a very different situation from home. The resources and play materials of the school are selected and arranged mainly for the child, while the environment of home is organized to serve the wider range of functions and needs of all family members. In this sense, one can assume that they would enjoy the abundance of play resources and environment. But what is this school setting like for children themselves? What kinds of feelings and meanings do they have in their mind? How do they transform this dramatic experience in their schooling process?

B. Purpose of the Research

There have been some efforts to understand the children's experiences in beginning schooling which vary in the setting and research approach (Hughes, Pinkerton, and

Plewis, 1979; Thompson, 1975; Blatchford, Battle, and Mays, 1982; Murton, 1971; McGrew, 1972). The main concern of these studies focused on the children's difficulties in transiting from home to school. They were viewed from the adult's perspectives (teacher, researcher, and parent), and focused on those things which were observable and measurable. Based on an adult's world view, they analyzed the children's beginning classroom experiences in terms of objective social structure. Hughes et al. (1979), for example, reported that 13% of the children in 34 samples were maladjusted in coping with school. Blatchford et al. (1982) also reported that children spent more time overall in solitary activities than in parallel or interactive contacts with other children. They also provided four styles of behavior after entry to school. The first group was oriented toward peers and the second group to staff. The remaining two groups spent relatively less time in social contact but each group showed a different style of spending time by themselves: one group spent this time constructively, while the other group was less constructive, less bright and more distressed on entry to school.

In a sense, these studies may help to identify regularities of children's behavior in adjusting to the school system; but, what kinds of implications are there in terms of our understanding of children? What does it mean to be 'maladjusted' for children themselves? What makes children orient to peers or teachers? These studies seem to

provide us with little about each child's unique lived world in becoming a student in a kindergarten classroom.

Let's have a more specific example. Hughes et al. (1979), in the research about children's difficulties on starting infant school in England, used the "Adjustment to School" scale developed by Thompson (1975). This scale covered twelve categories of behavior such as social relationships, language, persistence at activities, physical skills, and so forth. By means of teacher's ratings on a large number of children after they had been in school for about half a term, and by similar ratings on some of the children four terms later, the children's emotional states were codified and quantified in terms of each category. This approach might be useful for identifying some general tendency of children's behaviors. But, at the same time, we might also negligently lose something important and meaningful in each child's lived world. I believe that we need to know and understand the vivid and rich experiences of children themselves to give them more meaningful and comfortable educational experience.

The main purpose of this study was to understand the lived meaning of beginning experience of schooling for kindergarten children. For this study, three Korean children were invited as informants. As I am a Korean, it was hoped that I could penetrate into their meaning world more deeply. It was also assumed that the experiences of three Korean children in school might be affected by their home culture.

As an insider of their lives as well as as a Korean, I searched for a deeper understanding of their unique experiences in going to school within the whole context of their lives.

C. Research Questions

The main question of the study was "What is the lived meaning of children in becoming students in a Kindergarten classroom?" The following questions were elaborated to start and guide the research process, but each specific question was not pursued and examined separately. Nonetheless, it was hoped that each of them would provide significant clues to portray the whole picture of the child's lived meaning. The pre-entry phase was viewed as an important aspect of understanding each child's experience more deeply within the whole context of his/her life history.

1. Pre-entry

. What are the past experience and home background of the child?

- What kinds of group experience does the child have before going to kindergarten? (for example, play group or daycare)
- What attitudes and expectations do the parents have for the child?
- What kinds of family structure does the child have? Are both of the parents working? How many siblings does

the child have? What is the birth-order and sex of the child?

2. Entry into Kindergarten

. What is the lived meaning of the beginning experience of schooling for the child?

- what is the perceived meaning of teacher for the child?
- What is the perceived meaning of play materials for the child?
- What is the perceived meaning of classmates for the child?
- What is the perceived meaning of time schedule for the child?
- What is the perceived meaning of classroom activity (free play and teacher-directed activity) for the child?

D. Significance of the Research

In the book, Crisis in the Classroom, Silberman (1970) concluded after his extensive classroom observation that "schools fail,...,less because of maliciousness than because of mindlessness" (p. 81). It seems to me that one of the fundamental shared concerns of non-technological type of research may be to overcome this prevailing "mindlessness" or thoughtlessness in education. Barritt, Beekman, Bleeker, and Mulderij (1983) expressed this concern as follows:

> It is to the problem of mindlessness that educational research from a phenomenological perspective tries to speak by bringing intentions out from where they hide in the ongoing parade of unreflected moments so we become aware of the meanings represented in actions (p. 147).

Many early childhood educators have investigated a variety of questions and problems in an attempt to provide young children with more 'effective' educational experience. For example, how can we teach young children to have competent communication skills? What kinds of teaching styles are more efficient? What kinds of teaching materials are more useful? How can we develop a valuable program to help pre-service teachers for young children? It seems to me, however, that these educators did not question the reality of young children's life in the classroom from the children's points of view, especially when it is the first experience for young children.

We need to know and understand children's own meanings in the kindergarten classroom if we are to provide a meaningful education for them. If the priority of schooling is to help our children to live more meaningfully as valuable human beings, then we must try to understand our children's school world as deeply as possible. In this way it is hoped that we can learn to be more 'mindful' and more thoughtful as educators. In order to be mindful educators, we need more solid grounding for our educational efforts. And, thus grounding must be closely and directly connected to the primary experiences of the children themselves.

Vandenberg (1971) speaks of how we can ground education.

> To locate pedagogic authority within the child's world, i.e., from the child's point of view is to disclose how pedagogic authority exists itself in the lived-world of the child and to ground educating (P. 60).

This study is dedicated to helping us find some of the most basic and fundamental ground for the development of an early childhood education curriculum which is meaningful for young children.

II. Preunderstanding: The Meaning of Schooling

A. Introduction

A variety of efforts have been made to improve early childhood education, even though the approaches and basic philosophies among them were somewhat different. Some educational programs were focused on the more teacher-directed approaches while others had an unstructured, child-directed orientation. Recently, however, many early childhood programs tend to be moving to the more child-centered, so-called open classroom model of education. These programs reflect the belief that each child's needs and interests must have a priority if education is to be a more meaningful and secure educational experience. Some studies, however, oppose these beliefs about the significant place of children's needs and interests in education.

Gracey (1972) and Wilcox (1978) found that the children were expected to follow certain roles and standards which might be meaningless for them. Children were often controlled by the teacher and trained to supress their own feelings and meanings through the schooling process. It was reported that the uniqueness of each child and his/her own meaning world might not be considered to have crucial importance in the real schooling system.

In this chapter, I will look at the recent tendency of the philosophy of early childhood education to discover what beliefs we have in educating our children. And then I will

review some of the literature and research which is focused on what is really happening in the schooling, mostly in terms of early childhood levels. Finally, a reflection on the present reality of our schooling will be presented from the viewpoints of critical educators.

B. The Recent Trend of the Philosophy of Early Childhood Education

There have been a variety of approaches to early childhood education based on different philosophical or ideological assumptions about the nature of childhood and education. Recently, however, there seems to be an increasing self-reflection among early childhood educators. Approaches which tend to conceive of children as passive recipients of adults' predetermined world view have come under scrutiny. In these approaches, the meaning of early childhood education is likely to be understood as the provision of the standardized sets of knowledge and the behavioral norms of the given society.

This new self-reflection seems to have allowed many early childhood educators to re-orient their philosophies and views of teaching children. There is a revised movement toward a more 'open' approach of education. In a more open approach, the creative and active nature of children and their unique needs, interests, and experiences tend to be recognized. As well, a concern regarding teacher-student relationships, children's active participation in the

production of knowledge and an acceptance of their world views tend to be emphasized instead of a one-sided imposition of the prestructured information.

Many contemporary approaches to early childhood curriculum express this fundamental trend of emphasis, at least in terms of printed documents. For example, in the kindergarten curriculum of Korea, the basic goal of early childhood education is described as "helping children to be whole persons through diverse activities in the educational environments which are appropriate for their needs and interests" (Korean Ministry of Education, 1982, p. 19). The early childhood education goals of Alberta also reflect this perspective. According to the philosophy of Alberta Early Childhood Services (1984),

- Each child is unique and may have abilities which are different from those of other children.
- Parents and society should provide opportunities for children to develop their abilities to their fullest potential.
- The dignity and worth of each child must be respected and enhanced.
- The child whose needs have been met adequately is more likely to develop into a healthy, responsible and secure person.
- Children need time to come to know and develop their own understanding of their surroundings.

- Play is a central and necessary part of children's development. Play includes any activity children have freely chosen, is under their control and is not dominated or imposed by an adult (pp. 1-4).

Can we assume that these beliefs are reflected in classroom? Many research studies of classroom life have uncovered the differences between beliefs and actions. It seems that we have been paying too much attention to the enabling process of schooling, which focussed exclusively on the written and explicit philosophies and goals of school curriculum. For sure, children are learning basic knowledge and skills in their schooling which are essential for life in the contemporary society. But at the same time, when we change our vantage point and look at what is really happening in the classroom, we might be able to capture a different picture of classroom society as Jackson (1968) and Silberman (1970) have done in the past.

In referring to the somewhat negative part of schooling rather than the enabling role, I do not mean that these realities can represent the whole process of schooling. Rather I hope that we can have a critical moment to reflect upon the unknown and disregarded, but certainly existing, part of schooling so that we can see the situation within the whole context as it is. As Gadamer (1982) pointed out, "the only scientific thing is to recognize what is, instead

of starting from what ought to be, or what could be" (p. 466).

C. Social Realities of Schooling

Traditionally, studies of schooling have been dominated by a simple input-output model of teaching and learning that focussed an academic achievement. In this paradigm, schooling has been viewed as a "complex system that can be analyzed into its constituent components" (Eisner and Vallence, in Werner, 1979, p. 21), such as teacher attitude, teaching style, student achievement in subjects and so forth.

Recently, however, there have been attempts to describe the schooling process as a whole. In this approach, much more attention has been paid to what happens in the school and classroom than to how much is learned. Researchers using this approach believe that "it is unnecessary and often misleading to isolate a few factors within the system and label them cause and effect" (Hamilton, 1983, P. 314). The main focus of this wholistic perspective has been the hidden aspects of schooling. These hidden aspects include values, norms, and interests which are taught implicitly by the social system of the school, rather than on the explicitly known academic knowledge and skills.

According to LeCompte (1978),

> Going to school is part of socialization process; schools transmit skills, aspirations, norms, and behavior patterns which assist in the assumption of specific roles. They do so both overtly and

> covertly. Overtly, they transmit cognitive skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics. Less obviously, the schools pursue noncognitive objectives -- norms, values, and behavior patterns deemed important for socialization to adulthood (p. -- 22).

Jackson (1971) claimed that every classroom has two curricula which the students are expected to master. One is the stated curriculum and the second is the 'hidden curriculum.' He defined the hidden curriculum in classroom life as "the curriculum of rules, regulations and routines, of things teachers and students must learn if they are to make their way with minimum pain in the social institution called *the school*" (P. 20).

To fully understand the child's experience in schooling, we need to look at the hidden element of going-to-school phenomenon as well as the stated.

Schooling as Social Control

Silberman (1970) identified the characteristics of school life with "learning how to suppress one's feelings and emotions and to subordinate one's own interests and desires to those of the teacher" (P. 151). Many educators are centering on this negative reality of classroom life. They claim that children are controlled by the invisible characteristics of the school organization such as authoritative power of the teacher and continuous evaluation. Silberman (1971) presented four specific demands of adjustment to the institutional world of the school which are very similar to Jackson's (1968) three structural

features (crowd, praise, and power) of classroom. These four demands can be summarized as follows:

1. Children must learn to live in school without the assurance of the adult acceptance that children take for granted at home.

2. Children must manage their lives in a highly congested social environment where materials and activities must be shared.

3. Children must withstand continual evaluation of their's words and actions.

4. Children must adjust to the pervasive authority of school personnel (pp. 2-3).

Jackson and Wolfson (1971) studied how often children undergo experiences which tended to be regarded as disruptive or as interfering in terms of the natural pursuit of their desires. They observed the children in a nursery school with seven categories which were derived from the pilot study. They found that even in the nursery school setting, which may not be regarded as formal schooling, constraining episodes of one sort or another (child-child or child-teacher) appeared to be a common feature of nursery school life (one every five minutes).

What are the realities of the kindergarten classroom which can be regarded as the beginning stage of the formal schooling process? According to Gracey (1972),

> Kindergarten is the place which children begin to learn the pupil role. At the core of this learning is a set of classroom routines which the teacher introduces and then trains the children to follow

(P. 163).

Gracey refers to the kindergarten as an "academic boot camp" in which children are trained to their first bureaucratic roles. In this schooling process which forces the children "to obediently follow meaningless routines imposed by authoritative figures" (Gracey, 1972, P. 176), finally they learn that "being in school really does involve doing what you're told and never mind why" (Gracey, 1972, P. 170).

King (1982) also emphasizes the socializing aspects of kindergarten classroom, because "it is presumed to establish the foundation for the years of schooling that follow" (P. 18). Hence, she states that "teachers' messages about appropriate classroom behavior are particularly evident in kindergarten classroom" (P. 18). That is, the fact that kindergarteners are new participants in the schooling urges "the teacher to make norms of appropriate classroom behavior explicit, using clear, straightforward, repeated instructions" (P. 18). She reported that when children were asked to describe differences between kindergarten and home, most children responded by naming one or more restrictions on their uses of play materials. Their answers included responses such as: "The teacher is in charge of the toys here." "You have to talk low." "You cannot run in school." "You have to share." "There's lot more kids here!"

In this situation, children learn to ignore tempting materials, and to delay interaction with each other until the teacher allows them to play. Teachers also use the play

activity to induce the children in adjusting the school regulations. King concludes, however, that even though play is used as an instrument to help the children adjust to the constraints of the kindergarten classroom, "children also use play materials to achieve their own goals, and to develop personal meanings within the institutional context" (P. 27).

Kindergarten may not be exactly the same as the structured formal schooling situation. Many kindergarten programs are presently moving to the child-centered, free play activities, or the so-called, open classroom model. Nevertheless, it seems that the classroom cannot be free from the institutional characteristics of schooling. After analyzing the dynamics of social control in two different kinds of kindergarten classroom, open classroom and structured one, Borman (1978) reported that the teachers in the open classroom were more frequently observed using regulative or control strategies with the children than the teacher in the traditional classroom. Wilcox's (1978) survey of 32 classrooms supports a view of open classroom as much more highly regulated by teachers than one would expect.

The apparently more open classroom of the two kinds of kindergarten settings, replete with diverse learning centers and individualized contacts with each student, was found to be actually more authoritarian in terms of teacher control mechanisms. The above studies indicate that even the more open, child-centered kindergarten classroom is characterized

by the teacher's control and behavioral restrictions.

Schooling as Cultural Conflict

It can be assumed that because of the structural difference between home and school, parents and teachers are likely to have different norms and rules for the child's behavior. Parent-child relationships can be characterized by greater intensity and longer duration than those between child and teacher. But, time demands and the short-term nature of interpersonal relationships in school may force teachers to limit intimacy between themselves and children in order to protect both from excessive affective commitment (Hess, Price, Dickson, and Conroy, 1981). This psychological distance between teachers and children may be almost inevitable in the school organization.

McPherson (1972) contrasts the primary relationship of parents and children against the secondary relationship of teachers and children. According to McPherson, parents have "particularistic" expectation for their children and they are much more concerned with the individual qualities of their own child. However, teachers have "universalistic" expectations which lead them to give equal amounts of attention to each child, judging everyone by the same objective standards, using explicit and public criteria for making judgements. They rely on "rationality, order, and detachment" (Lightfoot, 1975, P. 34). Thus, we can assume that the home and school offer a somewhat different social

environment for young children in relation to their goals, socialization pressures, control strategies, and interaction with young children. Moreover, differences between these two settings, which are unavoidable for young children, may cause discontinuities or disparities between the experience of the child at home and at school.

Hess, et al. (1981) studied the contrasting styles of mothers and teachers of preschool children in terms of goals, expectations, and attitudes. They found some differences between them, even though mothers and teachers held similar goals for children. Mothers press for mastery of developmental tasks at an earlier age. Mothers teach in a style that is more direct, demanding, and explicit. Mothers appeal to their own authority in obtaining compliance while teachers involve rules more often.

These researches support McPherson's (1972) two kinds of relationships -- primary and secondary. Mothers are likely to demand higher quality of their own child's achievement because of the primary and very personal relationship, while teachers might be more concerned with the equal benefit of all children and the public order because of the secondary and psychologically detached relationship with the children.

Some researchers have focused on the cultual conflict at the more macro level; socio-economic status and ethnicity. Getzels (1974) suggested that differences between the values and language code of some social class and ethnic

groups of parents and those values and language of teachers might contribute to "discontinuities" in the child's experience at school. Thus, "children may have to attempt to function in an alien environment that requires behavior which is in striking contradiction to that which they have been taught to value" (Wilcox, 1982, P. 467).

Winetsky (1978) interviewed parents and teachers and compared the expectations of parents and teachers for the behavior of preschool children. She found that a high preference for self-direction was associated with the role of teachers and with parents of the Anglo middle-class mainstream. According to her, the child who was considered neither middle class nor anglo-American faced one set of behavioral expectations at home which required conformity and a reliance upon externally imposed demands, and a different set of expectations at school which required the child to be self-directing and to rely upon internal standards for behavior. In this situation, the child might be confronted with a dilemma.

D. Reflection: Search for a New Way of Understanding the Child in Education

> Understanding the child from the perspective of his world is to hold the view that, despite biographical and developmental determinants, the growing child is an intentional actor constructing a life project with consciousness, that becoming in the world involves a dynamic self-representation, that the child, too, is a historical being, a maker of history, a meaning-maker involved in a praxis upon the world (Suransky, 1982, P.36).

Traditionally, educational endeavour has been dominated by product-oriented model. In this framework, teaching behaviors are identified or created, children are exposed to those prescribed conditions, and then achieved output of the children is measured. In this tradition, the child's own perception and construction of knowledge has been disregarded. Children have been largely viewed as the 'passive recipients' of teacher's instruction.

Pinar (1975) described the image of the child implicit in the dominant conception of schooling as follows:

> Children are basically wild, unpredictable beasts who must be tamed and domesticated. Hence they cannot be trusted until they have internalized the values of socially controlled and emotionless adults (P. 360).

Within this perspective, children are viewed as empty vessels to be filled from the outside. They are not considered to have their own intentions nor the resources to lead their lives and create meanings. Thus, they must be imposed with something prepared unidimensionally by adult educators. As a result, one of the basic aims of the schooling turns out to be the "training of so-called disruptive impulses and their channeling into socially useful activities" (Suransky, 1982, P. 23).

Freire (1970) defined this mode of educating as "banking concept of education." He states:

> Education becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositer. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the "banking" concept of education, in which

> the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits (P. 58).

In this conception of education, teachers are primarily narrators, transmitting knowledge to the children who are assumed to know nothing and need to be trained. The children's almost enigmatical possibility of personal education is necessarily neglected through the schooling process.

During the last two decades, criticisms of this dominant conception of schooling have increased remarkably. The main theme of these criticisms is the contention that children are dehumanized through such schooling experiences. According to Macdonald (1975), children become engaged in a "forgetfulness" concerning their own meanings in this dehumanizing process. Through their continual schooling experiences, children are forced to "repress or submerge the unique meaning structure growing out of their own activity and take on the attitude and posture of the control agent" (Macdonald, 1975, P. 87). They become alienated from their own personal potentionality through repressive "forgetfulness." They are led to the life which is determined by the external demands of control agents, rather than by their own intentional and personal meaning world. As Vanderberg (1971) said, the child stops "wanting-to-be-someone-himself" (p. 77). That is, h/she is trained to be satisfied with 'being' according to other's expectations.

Thus, a new viewpoint of looking at the children in the educational efforts has been introduced by some critical educators. They claim that the children must not be regarded as objects for the playing out of teachers' needs and beliefs. Instead children are existential beings who have their own intentionality and purposiveness. Within these new viewpoints, the child's open communion with the world is emphasized in that the child lives directly in the world, prior to the alienation from the immediate world. Vandenberg (1971) stated:

> The educational task... is to take the being of the pupil into account by enabling him to say for himself what is important, to speak in his own voice, to determine for himself who he is, and to determine for himself and to accept responsibility for his being and for being with others (P. 153).

Educators who take this stance entertain the existential quality of the lives of children, rather than the measured quantity of it. They believe that the meaning and relevance of education to the child must be grounded in the individual's unique needs and interests, instead of imposing "what *we* think is important and what fits into *our* model or theory" (Beekman, 1983, P. 37). Vandenberg (1971) points out that true educational responsibility resides in accepting whatever help the child needs in order to be someone-him/herself. The acceptance of such help is "the ontological ground of pedagogic authority. It is when educating has significance for his being" (Vandenberg, 1971, P. 67).

How can we find the child's own meaning structure and existential interests? Suransky (1982) suggests that we should become "anthropologists" of childhood, "to make visible the existential ground of the everyday life experiences of the child" (P. 36). The role of anthropologists of childhood must provide descriptions which are "clear, vivid, faithful of experiences, of actions, of words, of phenomena" (Suransky, 1982, P. 36), and based on sensitive observations. The interpretative efforts, based on continual dialogue and thoughtful reflections, can make it possible for us to reach to the existential world of the child.

Gadamer's (1982) notion of "fusion of horizons" might introduce us to the understanding of the child in an authentic way. He suggests that the understanding of the child must involve the dialectical encounter between two horizons, the child and the teacher, rather than the teacher's unidimensional construction of the child's world. It seems to me that it is in this way that our educational efforts must be pursued and directed.

III. Research Approach

A. Qualitative Orientation

When children enter the kindergarten classroom, what is their lived world of becoming a student? To understand a child's real landscape of moving from home to school, I believe that we, as adults, need to understand the child's own horizon.

Traditionally, the so-called quantitative approach has been the dominant means of investigating the human phenomena. In this paradigm, the researcher employs some type of predetermined model of logico-deductive reasoning from theory to the measurable and quantifiable hypothesis, collects data with testing materials, and ultimately explains the causal relationships of particular variables. The basic aim of this process is to predict, control, and generalize human behavior with law-like statements. Within this paradigm, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to know what it is really like for young children to be in a new environment such as a classroom. Every human situation is unique and ever-changing, thus a quantitative approach cannot 'capture the moment' of the child's life in its full sense.

In order to understand a child's lived world as it is, we "have to be there 'in' the social context. That means being part of it, participating, interacting, changing, being changed, sometimes questioning" (Beekman, 1983, p.

39). Further we need to try to be free from our preconceptions and theories. This seems to be crucial when we study young children who cannot be explained by the conventional world of adults. Beekman (1983) cautions us as follows:

> As long as we see the actions of little children through the models of our shared adult conventionality, we are not likely to see the world as children, in their own uniqueness, see it (P. 40).

As adults, we might be already alienated from the child's landscape which is more "immediate and exciting - full of colors and changes" (Beekman, 1983, p. 40). Beekman further claims that we have to go inside the world of children and have a true dialogue with them, rather than imposing our convention, if we are to truly discover the essence of childhood. He describes the child's world as follows:

> The child's world is a world of sense, emotions, and actions; where "second nature," culturally determined meanings have not yet taken over the direct experience; where the outside world is an invitation to action; where a long tunnel is not merely a tunnel but an exciting mysterious shape that beckons a child to stamp and shout with reasoning echos (P. 43).

To catch the deep structure of this preconventional, personal, and unique landscape of the child, we need to turn to each child's own subjective world, rather than focus on the objective world that can easily be seen.

The research approach to grasp this subjective meaning world is generally referred to as a 'qualitative' or 'human science perspective.' According to Patton (1980), this

paradigm has been described as a world view which proposes that human phenomenon should be studied in a "holistic, inductive, and naturalistic" way. In the holistic approach, the researcher tries to understand the gestalt, the totality, and the unifying nature of particular settings in order to put together a complete picture of the social dynamics of a particular situation. In focussing on an inductive way to look at human phenomena, s/he starts from the real experience of the reality, without imposing pre-existing expectations or hypotheses. In this approach, the researcher must attempt to understand naturally occurring events, relationships, or interactions in their naturally occuring states. S/he does not attempt to manipulate the research setting (Patton, 1980).

Porter and Potenza (1983), in a discussion of differences between quantitative and qualitative research, present the nature of a qualitative orientation:

> Although aware of the existing theoretical framework, investigators using qualitative methods,...analyze and hypothesize during and after data collection, generating categories, comparing concepts, and constructing theories, as suggested by the data. In this way, the research is attempting to understand the explanatory schemes used by the subjects themselves and to discover patterns which emerge among subjects and settings. The emphasis of research is on the natural setting and the interplay among variables as they naturally occur. Because of the interest in understanding behavior from the subject's own frame of reference, the researcher often must get involved in the setting... (P. 158).

Patton (1982) speaks of *verstehen* as an integrating theme running through the qualitative tradition. According to him, the notion of *verstehen* is that human beings can be

understood in a manner that other objects of study cannot. "Men have purposes and emotions, they make plans, construct cultures, and hold certain values, and their behavior is influenced by such values, plans, and purposes" (Patton, 1982, P. 11). This notion implies that human behavior must be studied in terms of the meaning it holds, or how the world is understood by individuals.

In this qualitative orientation, because the goal is to understand in depth the phenomenon under investigation, the researcher must try to delve into the grounded part of it. In other words, we must dig out the deep meaning structure which exist behind the objective and surface world. Glaser and Strauss (1967) point out that the basic aim of this orientation is to generate theory, grounded on the primary experience with a particular phenomenon. This theory must be a conceptual world, but grounded on the concrete and lived world.

B. The Role of the Researcher

Within this human science paradigm, the researcher plays a vital role in terms of the direction of the research, because h/she is "the instrument for both data collection and investigation" (Duignan, 1981, P.292). In this sense, the researcher is a filter through which the hidden meaning of the world is emerging.

As human beings, we cannot escape our own subjective past experience and uniqueness in describing and

interpreting a certain phenomenon. We cannot be completely objective because we are living human beings who base our needs and interests on our everyday life. Kaplan (1964) speaks of the nature of the subjective observation by human beings.

> After the moment of the observer's birth, no observation can be undertaken in all innocence. We always know something already. And this knowledge is intimately involved in what we come to know next, whether by observation or in any other way(P. 132-133).

Barritt, et al. (1983) also described the inevitably subjective aspects of doing research.

> All research is conducted by someone and represents that person's beliefs about such matters as the importance of this subject, the value of that procedure, the significance of this results, the importance of this way of saying rather than that one (P.33).

To gain fuller understanding of the hidden meaning of the child's unique experience in starting the schooling process, if we try to be objective, we might lose something very significant, because objectivity "means to eliminate and deny what is really there" (Colaizzi,1978, P. 51). Colaizzi speaks of the meaning of objectivity from the phenomenological perspective.

> Objectivity is "fidelity" of phenomena. It is a refusal to tell the phenomenon what it is, but a respectful listening to what phenomenon speaks for itself (P. 52).

Hence, qualitative researchers try to acknowledge and take into account their own biases as a method of dealing with them. They use themselves as strong instruments to find more meaningful and valid information about certain

phenomenon. According to Becker and Gear (in Duignan, 1981, P. 290), the observer who is aware of these problems of subjectivity of inference is well equipped to deal with them because s/he "operates, when gathering data, in a social context rich in cues and information of all kinds." Thus, this "evergrowing fund of information gives the observer an extensive base for the interpretation and analytic use of any particular datum" (P. 32). While it may be difficult to accept that the researchers can transcend some of their own biases, the methods that the researchers use might serve as a guide in this process.

It seems to me that objectivity is almost impossible as well as inadvisable in the human world. When we try to be free from subjectivity, we could lose the fundamental and existential meaning world which only human beings can have. In this research, to use testing materials to maintain objectivity would hinder the research effort to find the hidden elements of the unique experiential world of each child. But, as Becker and Gear (in Duignan, 1981) suggested, because of this human element, we might be able to cross-check and re-examine the validity of our own interpretation through evergrowing speculation and dialogue with our subjects. In addition, we can be open to new information and new findings, because the human being is always *on-the-way of being* (Heidegger, 1962) at every moment.

C. Data Collection

Lofland (1971) has suggested four elements in the collection of qualitative data. First, the qualitative methodology must get close enough to the people and situation being studied to be able to understand the depth and details of what goes on within a given moment. Second, the qualitative methodologists must aim at capturing what actually takes place and what people actually say. Third, qualitative data consist of a great deal of pure description of people, activities, and interactions. And fourth, qualitative data consist of direct quotations from people, both what they speak and what they write down.

Participant Observation

According to Schatzman and Strauss (1973),

> The researcher must get close to the people whom he studies; he understands that their actions are best comprehended when observed on the spot, -- in the natural ongoing environment where they live and work... A dialogue with persons in their natural situation will reveal the nuances of meaning from which their perspectives and definitions are continually forged (pp. 5-6).

Wilson(1977) claims that the researcher needs to be an insider of the world under investigation "within which the subjects interpret their thoughts, feelings, and actions" (P. 249), in order to portray the real picture as it is. Silver and Ramsey (1983), even though they accept some weaknesses such as extensive training, excessive time commitment and observer bias, suggest that to be 'in there' to catch the subtle dimensions of children's experiences

broadens our points of view of the classroom.

According to Fine and Glassner (1979), however, participant observation with children involves special problems due primarily to the age differential. They describe four different roles that adults can assume in doing participant observation with children. These roles can be defined in terms of two relevant dimensions; (1) the extent of positive contact between adult (researcher) and child, and (2) the extent to which the adult (researcher) has direct authority over the child. As an ideal role for the researcher, they speak of the "friend role." In this role, the relationships between the researcher and the child can be "intimate and honest, and based on mutual goodwill, even though participant observer and actor may recognize the necessity for separate repertoires" (Fine and Glassner, 1979, P.156). For developing this "friend role," Fine and Glassner maintain that the formation of rapport is one of the necessary conditions. It seems to be true that children do not disclose their feelings and thoughts to someone they do not trust (Beekman, 1983). Vidich (1955, in Fine and Glassner, 1979, p. 116) claims that rapport with children is important because the position determines what is likely to be seen.

Interview

Qualitative research emphasizes the meanings which people place on their experience. Although participant

observation will yield significant information, it might be difficult to ascertain feelings, thoughts, and intentions without directly asking the person being studied. When the researcher assumes that the person's perspective is meaningful, knowable, and potentially explicit, it is necessary to use interviewing as a strategy for revealing his/her perspective (Patton, 1980).

In a traditional interview approach the researcher asks the subjects a series of predetermined and prestructured questions which the subjects are supposed to answer. Sometimes the subjects may choose from an array of given responses. With this type of interview, it is difficult to reveal the unique meaning structure for each child, because we cannot make a list of all the items to cover each child's particular and everchanging state. We need to let children speak for themselves in their own words. Therefore, qualitative interviewing is characterized as 'open-ended' on a continuum of degree of structure (Lofland 1971; Spradley, 1979; Patton, 1980).

In this sense, the least structured interview situation is informal conversation. Through engaging in numerous discussions, the researcher sometimes attempts to steer the comments toward an area of concern. At other times a causal chat may be more fruitful. The situation is likely be one in which the researcher is "present for conversation but does not participate in it" (Porter and Potenza, 1983, P. 165).

According to Lofland (1971), success in interviewing is dependent on an unthreatening and cordial approach to people. Because of the adult researcher's authority structure over the child which was cautioned by Fine and Glassner (1979), I tried to be as supportive and sympathetic as much as possible. Lofland (1971) described this interviewing style as follows;

> In preparing for interviewing and practicing it, we can all ask ourselves if we are in fact being sufficiently friendly and supportive; displaying sufficient concern for understanding the other person's point of view; taking him seriously in his own terms, and refraining from being judgemental-- especially in a negative way-- about what the person has said (P. 90).

Documentation

According to Battersby (1981), "grounded ethnography can be referred to as a strategy which utilizes the 'multiple-instrument' approach (Pelto, 1965) of the ethnographer to generate a thesis or picture of certain social processes" (P.93). This approach is referred to as "triangulation" which means "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon" (Denzin, 1978, P. 291) to have a more vivid portrayal of the phenomenon in question.

In the present study, there were a variety of formal and informal documents and processes which provided clues to the meaning of each child's experiences in school. Photographs, pictures, report cards, teacher-parent interviews, and private collections reflected each child's

world. These various documents and artifacts were utilized not only as a 'cross-checking' systems for verifying the validity of emergent meaning structures, but also as another solid ground to compare, generate, and refine the emerging themes.

D. Interpretation

Qualitative research does not pursue the kind of 'truth' which is fixed, replicable, predictable, and generalizable in a technological sense. Rather it searches for understanding human experience. Suransky (1980), in her argumentation against natural science paradigm, presents the basic goal of phenomenology as follows;

> Phenomenology has no 'solution' and no 'product' to offer, but is an open-ended pursuit of understanding based on dialogical encounter and the perception of socio-cultural relativism and its concommitant meaning structures (P. 172).

"A key term in understanding situations (scenes, settings, events) is interpretation" (Werner and Rothe, 1980, P. 96). In this study, the interpretation will play a major role in uncovering each child's lived meaning and in providing "thick description" of it. Interpreting is "the process of coming to understand situations, acts, artifacts, speeches which involves intents, motives, and viewpoints" (Werner and Rothe, 1980, P. 97).

In a sense, the qualitative orientation for a particular research question is an ongoing process of interpretation, based on the changing interpretive framework

of both the researcher and the child. This ongoing process is referred to as "hermeneutic circle." According to Werner and Rothe (1980), "in every act of interpretation, new meaning emerges for the interpreter as he acquires new experiences and attains changed vantage points in the situation itself. Understanding is cummulative as this interpreter-situation relation changes over time" (P. 106). Therefore, an interpreted understanding at a specific stage always has temporal character which contains the inevitable possibility of being changed in any situation.

The research process of this study can be seen as a continual interpretive effort in search of meaning for better understanding of each child's lived world in becoming a student. Thus, I tried to maintain an open attitude to listen to the child's voice and to pick up the essences of each child's reality.

E. Data Analysis

The data collected by the open-ended qualitative orientation were large quantities of transcriptions, field notes, and documents. The basic aim of collecting all these data was to discover the theory grounded by the real situation itself (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). To develop a grounded theory, a systematic analysis of all data was needed. The analysis of qualitative data had a dialectically and continually interpretative character. In this sense, analysis and identification of patterns could not be

isolated from the data collection process (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982).

The main purpose of this study was to search for essential themes from the continual interpretation process of the child's experience. Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest a constant comparison process as a method to reveal the emergent themes. In the study, I collected some initial data and attempted to make some sense out of them. And then, "to be constantly alert to emergent perspectives" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), I tried to continually go back to the changing meaning world of the child. Through this persistent interaction, the essential themes emerged, a process which Geertz (1973) described as one of "guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guess..." (P.20).

F. Credibility of the Research

The present research was intended to gain a better understanding of the reality a child experiences in the kindergarten classroom, rather than to verify certain hypotheses about it. Hence the basic aim of the present study was different from a quantitative approach attuned to explain a certain phenomenon with a prescribed framework that reduced the 'rich' part of the reality into abstracted and alienated theories.

In his discussion of the criteria of assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative research, Guba(1981)

suggested that we need to understand the validity of research in the context of each study's different perspective. He claimed that each was apprehended on the basis of basic assumptions about the nature of reality, the nature of truth statements, instruments, design, and so forth. He stated that we must judge the level of trustworthiness of a study in terms of its own world view.

The qualitative researcher plays a critical role in doing research, because the fundamental goal of the research is to better understand the subject's world, based on the interpretation process which is self-directed by the researcher and guided by the subjects. In this sense, the researcher's insightful sensitivity has a significant part in conducting research. Glaser and Strauss (1967) claim that "the root source of all significant theorizing is the sensitive insight of the observer himself... The theorist's task is to make the most of his insights by developing them into systematic theory" (pp. 251, 256).

Then, how can we check whether the researcher played a sensitive role in observing the phenomenon under study or not? Cottrell (1982) speaks of the context of developing and confirming these insights in the whole process of conducting research as follows:

> Qualitative research is a continual, dialectical process of observation, interviewing, and participating, while analyzing emerging themes. These themes are then confirmed through intersubjective understanding with the participants...again, a mutual, respectful, collaborative learning experience. A further step might be discussion of the data and themes with

> others who have an interest in the phenomenon under study. The final test of insights, perhaps, is the reader's reaction; to what extent do conclusions seem illuminating, instructive, and perhaps even universal (P. 46)?

In this sense, the qualitative researcher engages in a continual process of critical reflectivity during the whole process of inquiry in order to become conscious of his/her own preconceptions about the phenomenon under study. Husserl (in Cottrell, 1982) refers to this process as "'bracketing away' -- recognizing your preconceptions, ... for yourself and your reader, in order to put your interpretation into a proper context" (p. 48). The subjective interaction between researcher and subjects is acknowledged as an inevitable window through perceptions are constructed. But, the qualitative researcher clarifies his/her involvement in doing research and then presents an account of the critical reflectivity to the reader. There is no "hidden agenda" (Cottrell, 1982, p. 50) in this approach.

In a sense, however, we might be able to say that the qualitative research is guided by the less subjective stance than the quantitative one, because "the discovery process and the questions raised by the researcher need not be related to any "received or prior theory" (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 12). Thus, through a consistent dialectical and critical reflection process, the qualitative approach might allow the researcher to go beyond his/her biases and preconceptions, which will then lead to trustworthy research.

G. Delimitation

A study cannot be free from the temporality and thus the incompleteness of understanding since we, as researchers, live within our own horizons which are limited in time and space. It is already embedded in the qualitative approach that such a study has its own limit and is incomplete in some senses. Without awareness of this characteristic of the study, an understanding of the research can be misled from the outset.

I have intentionally delimited my concerns of this study to aspects which are significantly related to a proper understanding of the research. First, my way of seeing and interpreting three children's world can be influenced by my own cultural background as I am Korean. It may be possible for those who are from different cultures to interpret the children's experiences in different ways. Thus, this study is viewed from my cultural horizon which may provide a different perspective and must be understood in this light.

Secondly, the main focus of this study is to understand the meaning of schooling from the children's perspective rather than from the teacher's. This does not mean that the teacher's view is not important when examining the reality of contemporary schooling practice. My preference of children's perspective is based on my understanding of our historical moment where children's own meanings tend to be negated or overlooked in most educational settings.

Thirdly, in the qualitative approach, it is one of the most difficult tasks for the researcher to validate an interpretation to the reality. This task tends to be more difficult when we try to understand the world of children. Although there is no one correct interpretation of reality, a variety of approaches are used in qualitative research. In this study, the children's drawings and photographs were used as additional ways of confirming three children's lived experience in classrooms.

Finally, it is not my intention in this study to make a set of explicit recommendations or general guidelines to change the existing system of schooling. This does not mean that I have no concern for the improvement of our present educational practices. Schooling is so rich and unique that one general rule or technique can hardly be applied to the practical situation without reflective deliberation. Thus, in this study, my main concern is to allow us, as educators, to have reflective moments in order to be aware of and to go beyond the contemporary situation of schooling in a concrete way.

H. Research Procedure

Initially I contacted a Korean lady who was in charge of the infant class in a Korean church in Edmonton for names of children who would be attending a kindergarten in September, 1985. There were six Korean children (four boys and two girls) who could be the possible informants for this

study. All of their parents were willing to have their children participate.

All the boys and one girl had one year of play school experience and the other one girl had two years of daycare experience. Since I intended to select three children from this group, some criteria were applied. The girl who had two years of daycare experiences was excluded from this study, since the child who had not had much experiences in the institutionalized setting seemed to be more appropriate for this study. The principal would not permit me to be in the classroom of the other girl. Thus eventually three boys, Jason, Ricky, and Sam were selected as the final informants for this study. Jason was to attend the Geoffery School and Ricky and Sam the Moonlight School. During August and early September, formal approval from the Edmonton Public School Board and from the two kindergarten teachers and principals was obtained.

The five months from August to December in 1985 were the main period of data collection. In August, the parents of Ricky and Sam were invited to discuss with me their views of their child, their educational expectations, the child's previous life history, and so forth. As Jason's parents were visiting Korea during August, they were not interviewed at this time. These discussions helped me understand the child's experiences in schooling in a broader context. During this period, a direct meeting with each child was avoided because of the possibility of influencing his

experience in the classroom by knowing me previously.

Although I entered the classroom as an observer with each child in September, I did not attempt to establish a special relationship with any of them during the first month. I tried to focus on my observations on the child's on-going activities. During my observations in the classroom, I took notes about the child's actions and interactions in the classroom, music room, library, playground, and hall.

Frequent and deep conversations with each parent and teacher in terms of the child's life at home and school, especially when I was not present, were necessary supplementary paths at this stage of data collection, as deep interaction with the child was avoided and the amount of time I could be with the child was limited. Conversations with each parent and teacher took place at least once a week. Every conversation was audiotaped. Occasional conversations with the teacher were attempted during or after class. Every night a diary was written reflecting on what I saw and felt during the day and my intended plans for the next day were outlined.

Basically this period of data collection was designed to capture a general picture of the child's life-world in the beginning of kindergarten. This general picture was anticipated to guide me in narrowing down my viewpoints into more significant parts of the totality of the child's lived world.

October to December was devoted to an intensive pursuit of the essential themes which emerged from the child's life-world in the classroom. All the approaches such as participant observation in the classroom, regular conversations with each parent, occasional chatting with the teacher, and maintaining a diary were also continued in this later part of data gathering. The conversations with each child were propelled for the affirmation of his meaning world and for the re-generation of the tentatively captured themes. Photos were taken of the child's involvement in activities which seemed to be significant. These photos were introduced to stimulate and challenge the conversation with the child later. As a useful way to induce each boy to reveal their inner world, I also asked them to draw pictures about their experiences as a student (Coles, 1965).

I. Pilot Study

The piloting stage for this study took place during the first three weeks in June, 1985. The main aim of this preliminary phase was to allow me to get a sense of being in the classroom as a researcher and to discover some of the problems which I had not anticipated. Basically this effort provided me with practical experiences in doing field work type of research. This opportunity was useful in the sense that it oriented me to 'really be' there in the classroom, to 'directly feel' and have some 'real sense' of doing field work.

Initially I met with the director of Green Forest Daycare in Edmonton at the beginning of June. I introduced the nature of this study to get permission to be a participant observer in the kindergarten classroom for several weeks. She agreed to allow me to do my piloting in the daycare. We also had discussions regarding the education of young children, kindergarten administration, the quality of staff members, and other issues related to early childhood education.

The daycare had one kindergarten classroom for five-year-olds which operated from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. After lunch this program continued to provide some children with daycare services. Children who did not need extra care from outside of home in the afternoon went home around 11:30 a.m. According to the director, there was no particular difference between this kindergarten classroom and other kindergartens in general, except that the center provided extra child care services in the afternoon. She characterized the philosophical orientation of this kindergarten as a play-based approach rather than a structured and/or cognitively oriented one. She put an emphasis on the uniqueness of each child and on his/her individual rate of development. She described the role of teachers as helping children play and find their own meaning rather than directing them to follow an adult's one-sided instruction. She seemed to be quite satisfied with all the teachers' interactions with the children in the daycare.

Adam, a Korean boy, had been in the kindergarten classroom since the first week of the month. This situation allowed me to have a similar experience to that of my main study since, as noted previously, I was going to focus on three Korean children as they began their schooling experinces in kindergarten.

During the three weeks of piloting, I was basically a participant observer who attempted to sensitively pick up Adam's actions and feelings and to have conversations with him when the situation enticed me to uncover some of his emerging meanings. At the same time, I tried to take field notes of his ongoing activities as well as the surrounding contexts. During interviews with him and with his mother, brief notes and tape recording were made. Pictures were taken to see how Adam, as well as other children, reacted to the presence of a camera in my hand and to the use of pictures to initiate conversations. Later, reflections on each day's experience in the classroom were written down to remind me of some of the useful approaches and attitudes related to my field work and also to examine my inappropriate behaviors in the classroom situation. Some of the issues or guidelines which seemed to have significance in terms of collecting more meaningful and relevant data can be summarized as follows:

1. Although it seemed to be important to immediately ask the child about his feelings at a certain moment before

he could have time to reflect on or forget about it, I noted that it was difficult to have deep conversation with him in the classroom setting. Sometimes he moved to other play areas and other times he just ignored my questions. Hence I took pictures of him and some of his seemingly favorite centers in the classroom. Later I showed him the pictures to induce him to express some of his feelings about his classroom life in a warm and free atmosphere out of school. He was so excited about the pictures that he began talking before I asked some questions. Using this approach, I could confirm or, in some cases, question my prior interpretation about his feelings in the classroom. It seemed that to let the children uncover some of their inside worlds, I might need to provide them with concrete situations which were directly related to their experiences. I should also offer an appropriate time and place which would encourage them to be open about their own intentions without being forced by my need.

2. In the qualitative research orientation, the formation of the intimate rapport between the researcher and informants is one of the most critical factors in approaching and revealing their deep meaning worlds. But in the pilot study, the formation of a friendly relationship too soon induced the child to rely exclusively on me in the classroom. He always asked me to play and be with him. It seemed that often I needed to purposely distance myself from the child to provide him with an opportunity to play by

himself or with other children. This allowed me to see the child's experience from a somewhat detached stance, as well as to decrease the influence of my presence on his experience in the classroom.

3. During the first several days of this exploratory step, I did not take notes in the classroom. Not only was I worried that I might lose something significant about the child's experience when my attention was on the recording, but I was not comfortable writing some of my observations among the children and the teachers. Thus I could not help being very keen to remember everything about Adam's actions in the classroom so that I could later describe the range of happenings clearly and vividly. But later, when I began to describe my observations and my feelings, I found it was difficult to reproduce the vividness of the child's actions and feelings. I realized that I had to jot down as many things as possible about the immediate situation right after the observation in other places like washroom, hall, and so forth.

4. Note taking, along with tape recording during the interview, was a remarkably useful approach for catching more subtle and complex situational moods and feelings. It was helpful as it also reminded me of facial expressions, bodily gestures, my hunches, and so forth.

5. During interviews with Adam's mother, my basic attitude toward our conversation was to let her speak and lead the conversation at her own pace. I was also sure that

any topic in our conversation could be a clue that would help me understand the child's experiences in the classroom. But I noted that sometimes I needed to lead or redirect our conversation and remind her of the original topic, our discussion about her child. She would often lead the conversation in a direction which seemed to be somewhat irrelevant to the original theme of our talk. I was uncomfortable about interrupting her free talk and worried that she might feel intimidated or controlled. However, she seemed to fully understand the necessity of my interruption and the redirection of our conversation into the boundary of the original topic.

There were some dilemmas which could not be decided either one way or the other in a certain situation, because of the subtleness, dynamics, and uniqueness. In general, however, the first hand experience during the pilot phase enabled me to have real sense of doing field work.

IV. The Traditional Value System of Educating in Korea and its Changes in Contemporary Age

A. Introduction

In every society, there are certain values and beliefs which are taken for granted by members of that culture. These values and beliefs compose the basic fabric of the everyday lives of the people and influence their way of thinking, acting, and interacting with others in that particular society.

Then, what can be said about the value system of Korean people? What philosophical foundation has been basic to their own roots? Although aspects of Korean tradition appear to be weakened and changed in the modern society, many facets of the Korean way of life still remain. In this chapter, a general basic picture of the Korean value structure, as it relates to educational practice, will be introduced from a comparative perspective with that of the Western culture. The impact of Westernization in modern Korean society will also be presented. This description is intended to familiarize people with Korean tradition and to enhance the understanding of three Korean children's unique experiences in Canadian schools. The situation of Korean immigrant parents who are living with two different cultures within the Canadian context will also be presented.

B. Korean Value System

The Basic Attitude Toward the Child

The traditional attitude of educating the children in Korea might seem somewhat strict and stern. Korean parents tend to have various restrictions and expectations (or even requirements) about their children's behaviors. Particularly, they tend to be firm in teaching their children to behave in certain ways which are believed to be 'right' in Korean tradition and which are related to the ethical aspects of human life such as respect for the elders, courtesy toward others, modesty, concession, etcetera.

The strictness of Korean parents seems to be a result of feeling they have a crucial responsibility to educate or guide their children into a 'wholesome' way of living. They believe that if they are not stern in their guidance, they might ruin their children's future. In other words, they tend to believe that they need to guide their children's life, rather than allowing their children freedom of choice. One Korean immigrant mother was experiencing these types of her basic attitudes, in comparison with those of Canadian people.

> When I go to the playground with my children, I find that our way of relating to our children seems to be different from those of Canadian parents. We tend to be attached to our children very strongly. In a sense, we seem to be regulatory and to give our children excessive interference. The basic standpoint of Canadian parents, however, seems to let their children solve problems by themselves. The

> children do not ask their parents to help them, either. I have the impression that, as parents, they do not seem to really be concerned about their children. They seem to live as each independent individual to each other (August 17, 1985).

On the other hand, it seems that Korean parents tend to attach themselves to their children very strongly and deeply. This strong connection between parents and children might be related to some concrete ways of rearing children in Korea. In Korea, the mother will usually stay in the same bed with her child until s/he is old enough to stay by him/herself in a different room. If a younger child comes, s/he moves to his/her grandmother's room.

When the mother takes her child with her, she usually carries him/her in her arms or on her back with a blanket. Korean people do not use a stroller, like in Western society. A stroller seems to symbolize the detached and individualized way of connecting mother and child. Korean parents do not really separate their children from themselves. They work hard mainly because they want to support their children as much as possible. They sacrifice almost everything for the benefit of their children. They do not really care about their own needs and difficulties. Thus, there tends to be a very strong emotional bond between the parents and their children, which continues no matter where they are or what they are doing.

Boy Preference

Within the traditional life view of Korean people, there has been a predominant emphasis upon the concept of the "family" (Son, 1978). When the child is born, s/he becomes a member of a certain family rather than an independent individual. Thus the evaluation of one person has the representative nature of the whole family.

There is a strong value orientation toward the perpetuation of a paternal family lineage which took root in Confucianism (Son, 1978), and influenced the belief for a 'son preference' within the Korean spirit. As Solberg described, "the son was essential to carry on the family; he was the link that ties the future with the past" (p. 112). In this vein, one of the most demanding tasks for the married woman is to produce a son. If she cannot, there is no way to escape from guilty feelings about terminating the family, because only the son is entitled to connect the family.

As a result, the boy tends to have more privileges than the girl within the family, which can encourage him to feel superiority and authoritative power. In particular, the advantage of receiving the formal education outside the home is offered more frequently to the boy than to the girl. The parents also expect the boy to improve the social status of the family.

Role Education

Since Korean society can be regarded as family-oriented, each individual is given a certain position or role within the family as soon as s/he is born (You, 1980). In this context, the life of each person is closely connected to other members of the family. Furthermore, the meaning of life can be found in relation to others, rather than as an independent being. This type of value system or family orientation is best reflected in the rationale for the marriage between man and woman in the Korean culture (Choi, 1976, in You, 1980). Within the traditional Korean society, marriage is not the union of two individual persons. Rather it is an event between two families. The woman becomes a member of the husband's family and is required to play a designated role within the family rather than be the wife of one man. The married man also has his own role within his family and his wife's family.

Hence, even when the children are young, the transmission of each different role for boys and girls tends to be regarded as very important. According to one main textbook in the traditional Korean education, there is a statement that "the boy and the girl are prohibited to see each other when they become seven-year-olds" (You, 1980, p. 126). This is not only a precept for the man and the woman to remain chaste, but also implies that when children are seven-years-old, they are required to learn, in earnest, the different roles and obligations of a man and a woman. They

are taught to follow the different social norms and behavioral standards toward each other.

For the boy, the expected role is to manage the whole family, especially in terms of making the living and having the major commitment of responsibility. Thus a boy is encouraged to be active, outgoing, and responsible. However, the girl is not allowed to 'bring out' herself. She learns to be quiet, modest, gracious, and patient. She takes charge of keeping house. She has more restrictions on her behavior than a boy. The mother plays a key role in teaching the girl these virtues. In this sense, the 'home education' has a greater significance for the girl than for the boy.

Family Structure

The traditional family structure in Korea is an extended one where grandparents, parents, uncle, aunt, and children live together in the same house. Within this family structure, the responsibility for child-rearing is not restricted to the parents, but rather includes all family members, especially grandparents. Within this family, the children can have ample care and support from other members of the family even when their parents cannot take care of them.

When a younger brother or sister is born, the older child does not have to experience the dramatic feeling of being separated from his/her mother or of feeling lonely and insecure. When children are young, they learn the meaning of

human relationships through a direct experience with many people within the family. They can have a real and rich opportunity to see, feel, and learn about the place of older people in their lives; respect for elders comes out in this context. Chung (1976) says, "There were always people - grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles - whom the children could depend on and speak to in the family" (p. 33-47). In this sense, the nature of education could have multi-directionality among all family members instead of the reciprocal interaction between parents and children.

Moreover, there is also a strong tendency to respect elder people, as can be envisaged in the extended familial tradition. The grandfather in the family has the highest position in leading the family and teaching the children. He is fully respected by all family members. His widely and deeply experienced wisdom through his whole life has a very strong influence in teaching his grandchildren. The grandmother also tells stories to her grandchildren. Although the grandparents tend to have a strict attitude in teaching their grandchildren, they are usually permissive and give plenty of caring love to them.

Emphasis on Studying

> The man cannot be human being without studying. The most fundamental achievement from this study is that we can get an insightful implications for our ordinary life (Youl Kok Yi, in You, 1980, p. 139).

As Yi, one of the greatest scholars in Korean history, stated, the importance of 'academic learning' has been

emphasized through the life of Korean people. Although there is little opportunity for the lower-class people to participate in academic activities, they still highly regard them.

For Koreans, the ultimate aim of academic achievement is to develop an ethical mind rather than to obtain technical knowledge or skills. Therefore, to 'mentally grow up' tends to have a more precious place in Korean life than materialistic abundance. Yi is showing this value system when he states:

> The aim of education is not to pass the examination and to take a higher position in the society. Rather it is intended to teach man to be a "true human" who is sagacious and virtuous with the strong commitment of moral duty (in You, 1980, p. 128).

Western Influence in Korea

Korean people have preserved their own tradition, as described above, over a comparatively long history. Since they began to have contact with Western societies, however, many aspects of their tradition came to be affected by Western culture. For example, many Korean parents learned different ideas about child education. They began to put their children in a separate room for the purpose of cultivating independence. The differential attitude toward boys and girls became weakened and they began to gain a more equal status.

The extended family structure, influenced by Western technology, also began to be challenged by the movement of

industrialization, urbanization, and mobilization. Moreover, the impact of Western individual-oriented values led to additional resistance against the traditional extended family structure. Although some Korean people actively seek to receive and accept new ways of life very positively, for most of the people, in a sense, changes were an inevitable and necessary for the survival in contemporary society, regardless of their voluntary decision.

Although many aspects of Korean life have been remarkably affected by this Westernization, there are still people who want to keep the Korean tradition and have tried to find new, worthwhile insights from the blend of a traditional culture and a contemporary, technological society. Some parents began to realize the value of an extended family system in terms of the meaning of human life and the education of their children. Some younger mothers who want to seek their own careers or to have a job, also find a practical benefit from extended family; they can obtain some help from other relatives in keeping their house and in taking care of their children. On the other hand, however, they also want to be free from the traditional family system in which the woman is required to stay at home and do housework. Many Korean mothers want to pursue their own life as individuals outside of the home.

Thus, in general, the situation of Korean people may be that they are neither Westerners nor traditional Koreans. Some people seem to eagerly accept the Western life pattern

and value system, but others, who do not find meaning in this new life style, stick to their own traditions. Sometimes the practical reality does not allow them to preserve their own tradition, although they want to keep it. Hence, the situation in Korea seems to be very ambiguous, and depending on the individual and on the aspect of the traditional Korean culture, the impact of Westernization seems to have different meanings and significance. It does not seem to be a matter of either one way or the other. Even within an individual, there can be contradictory life values and each value may differ depending on the situation.

C. Korean Culture within Canadian Context

The 'Western way of life' has had an impact on the Korean society. This influence is more apparent for families who have moved to Canada. The Korean and Canadian cultures seem to have value systems which are different and incompatible; yet, these two cultures co-exist for Koreans who have moved to this country. Because of the co-existence of two incompatible cultures, many Korean parents tend to experience conflict in teaching their children. One Korean mother said:

> I feel that there seems to be no right way or best way to teach our children. I am not so sure whether I have to let my children decide everything by themselves or not. I think that the independence is important, but also the serious consideration about parents' advices cannot be overlooked in our life (August, 1985).

These differences between two cultures can also create conflicts for Korean parents and children living in Canada. On the one hand, most of the Korean parents hope that their children can keep abreast with Canadian children and move upward into a higher socio-economic status in Canadian society. This 'move upward' demands that their children integrate Canadian values and social preferences. On the other hand, they also try to keep their own cultural tradition. For example, they teach their child to be respectful of their elders and of the Korean language. In a sense, many Korean immigrant parents seem to feel more strongly that they have to preserve their own tradition than do the people who are living in Korea.

According to Seif's (1984) research of Korean immigrant families in Edmonton, "the parents thought it was important for their child to be able to speak, read, and write Korean" (p. 39) and they are using Korean with their children almost all the time at home. They gave the following reasons for keeping their own language at home; "to keep our Korean language," "for the children to be able to speak Korean better," "to let the children know their Korean language and not forget it," "Koreans should use Korean with each other at home," "to keep our unique tradition and culture," and "children will lose the Korean language if it is not used at home" (p. 37). But the parents want their children to achieve the same level of excellence as Canadian children in terms of English so that they can survive in this

English-speaking country.

Kim (1976) studied the conflicting situations between Korean immigrant parents and children over children's demands for greater autonomy as they grow up in Canadian society. He found that Korean girls were less traditional in their values and were in increased conflict with their parents as their length of residence in Canada increased. This is probably because Korean girls are traditionally given considerably less freedom than boys. Thus, the possibility of conflict in Canada is accordingly greater for them (in Michelson, Levine, and Spina, 1979).

As Kim (1976) and Siefs' (1984) studies exemplify, most of Korean immigrants living in the Canadian culture are likely to be in a contradictory context; they want to keep Korean traditions as well as adjust to those of Canada. One Korean immigrant mother said,

> I do not want my child to become naughty to the parent and the elderly. But, it seems that she is learning that kind of behavior from other Canadian children. She thinks that the behavior is a right one and she stands against me. I do not know what to say and how to deal with her attitude.... Sometimes, I try to understand her, because she has been educated in Canadian schools and she could not have enough opportunities to be involved in Korean culture except at home. The time when she stays at home and can have interaction with us is very short in comparison with that of staying outside. But, I still hope that she will grow as a Korean who can be proud of our culture and especially speak Korean without much problem (1985, May 3).

As she said, it seems in general that Korean immigrants are striving to preserve their own traditions with their children, even though the immediate circumstances compel

them to adopt to the Canadian life style.

V. A Portrayal of Beginning Experience of Schooling for Three Kindergarten Children

A. General Description

Home Background

The parents of the three Korean children in this study immigrated into Canada in 1977. Since then, they have been residing in Edmonton. All of them were born and educated in Korea and spent more than twenty years of their life in that country. Except Sam's parents, they were married in Canada. Although there have been some difficult times in the past eight years adjusting to the economic and socio-cultural ways of life in this unfamiliar country, they now appear to have adjusted to a certain extent. On the other side, however, they still find many differences and obstacles such as language and ethnic discrimination which they feel are almost impossible to overcome. They try to visit their home country, Korea, at least every four or five years to be with their own people and in a familiar culture. They also believe that their children need to visit their home land to experience and learn about their roots. The parents want their children to visit Korea as often as possible, especially as they become older.

In the following section, the home background of each child will be presented. More specifically, what kinds of family background does each child have? How can we

characterize each child? What are the parents' general beliefs and attitudes in terms of education?

Jason

Family Background: Jason's family is a nuclear one which consists of his parents, Jason, and his older sister, Joy. Jason's father is working as a welder. Sometimes he moves to other places for his work and stays separated from his family. Often he works at night and sleeps at home in the day time. Thus Jason's mother has been trying to keep her house very quiet so as not to interfere with her husband's sleep during the day. She reflects that "probably that's why Jason became very sensitive. He was reared in a very quiet environment" (Sept. 10).

Jason's mother has been staying at home rather than seeking employment, which is not the usual case for Korean immigrant families. Since Jason's birth, she has remained at home as she realized that to educate her own children was of utmost importance. She said that, "Money can be earned at any time, but education has its own critical time" (Sept. 10). Thus she took care of Jason all the time. In a sense, however, she feels that she became too involved in her family life and children. Sometimes she wonders whether somewhat indulgent care has been given to Jason and might have a harmful effect on him.

Jason has only one sibling, his sister Joy, who is three years older than Jason and attends the same school as

he does. According to Jason's mother, Joy is sociable, lively, and talented. She remembers all of her teachers' birthdays and prepares a present for each of them. She also enjoys making things for her teachers and her friends. On the other hand, she often complains that her mother loves only Jason and she seems to have difficulty sharing things with him, including her mother's care and attention.

Characteristics of Jason and His Daily Life: Jason was born in Canada in December of 1980. He has been raised mainly by his mother since he was born. He did not have any special physical problems or any critical experiences in his family history. He had a year of playschool experience and during that time, according to his mother, he did not experience any difficulties or problems. At home, he uses the Korean language as his means of communication.

According to Jason's mother, he is very sensitive, tender, and submissive. When he realizes that he did something wrong, he does 'good things' to make sure his mother is not angry. Until last year, he felt very afraid of unfamiliar people and would stick close to his mother. From my observations of him in class, I would judge him to be very organized and orderly. He was good at putting things in the right place and cleaning up his mess.

Jason usually stays at home and watches TV (mostly Sesame Street and cartoons) or plays with toy cars and robots. In fact, Jason was sent to the afternoon kindergarten class because his parents wanted him to have a

chance to watch Sesame Street in the morning. Later his mother said, "Jason seems to learn more from the Sesame Street program than from the school." He does not play much with his sister, "probably because of the age gap" (JM[1], Sept. 10). He has one close friend, Denny, a Korean boy who lives close to Jason's home. Before he went to kindergarten, Jason spent much of his time with Denny.

Educational Attitude of Jason's Parents: Jason's mother hopes that her children will develop a generous personality and have a plain life rather than become well-known persons. She also thinks that morality and intelligence should be in harmony. She tries to teach her children to care about others and to be modest. At the same time, she emphasizes intellectual growth. She believes that she has to be open and supportive of her children and allow them ample opportunity to become familiar with the Canadian life style. She said, "In the case of Jason, I do not prepare any specific things as I did for Joy or for myself when she was going to start kindergarten. I just hope that Jason can adjust to the school without much problem. I don't expect any more than that" (Sept. 10).

As was described, Jason's mother does not work because of her educational concern for her children. Hence she tries to make sure that everything goes well in terms of their education. She emphasizes cleanliness, orderliness, and regularity of every day life. Sometimes her children

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[1]Jason's mother. Hereafter, RM means Ricky's mother, SM means Sam's mother.

complain about her strict attitudes. But she feels that even when she gives them more freedom, they can not seem to enjoy it. For example, although she gave them a special opportunity to stay up late on Friday night, they could not stand it and fell asleep by themselves. She feels that in a sense she controls or interferes with her children excessively; she also feels that this is her own style and she can not stop it.

Ricky

Family Background: Ricky's family has their own grocery store in a high-rise building. Ricky's mother shares with her husband in working in their store. Ricky's grandmother, who lives nearby, comes to Ricky's house and takes care of the two children when their mother works in the grocery. The grandmother usually stays at Ricky's house half of a day in the afternoon. Thus Ricky was raised, in part, by his grandmother. According to Ricky's mother, Ricky's grandmother is very permissive and often spoils her grandchildren. She says:

> But I am somewhat restrictive and stern. So sometimes I am worried about the negative effects of the inconsistency of child-rearing attitude between my mother and me (Sept. 2).

Unlike Jason's mother, Ricky's mother is concerned about the lack of time she has to spend with her children. She tries to stay at home and play with her children at least two days a week.

Ricky has one sister, Susan, who is one year older. She seems to be a very lively and expressive girl. Whenever I went to Ricky' house, she talked much more than Ricky did. She also looked after Ricky when he was in school. One day in September, Ricky told Susan that a boy on playground had hit him. She went to the boy and said, "Why did you hit my brother? If you do it again, I will tell the teacher." Ricky's mother said that when they play outside with their friends, Ricky depends on Susan to solve his problems.

Characteristics of Ricky and His Daily Life: Ricky was born in December, 1980, at the around same time as Jason. He was raised without any special health problems. Last year Ricky attended the same play school as Sam, the other boy in the study. According to Ricky's mother, "He did not adjust well to the playschool. He did not participate in the games or play with the other children. He never raised his hand when the teacher asked questions. Sometimes he did not want to go to school."

Ricky seems to be lively and friendly, although he is not outgoing with others. According to his mother, he is very shy and lacks social confidence. When he meets unfamiliar people, he always sticks close to his mother. However, he cares about his sister. His mother said that when she gives him something to eat or to play with, he always waits for Susan and shares with her.

Ricky usually plays a lot with Susan at home. The relationship between two of them seems almost an equal one,

rather than hierarchical one, maybe because there is not much age difference between them. Ricky likes to draw pictures, cut things, and make art crafts with his sister.

Educational Attitude of Ricky's Parents: Ricky's parents expect and encourage their children to be happy and ethically mature individuals who believe in God. They do not expect them to be smarter than others. They just hope their children will grow up as true human beings. They have set up a rule that the children have to use Korean at home and English outside.

Ricky's mother seems to gain much knowledge about child growth and development from reading the books and tries to use this information in her own situation. She feels that some things from the books are useful but others are not working in her practice.

For the beginning of kindergarten, Ricky's mother taught him his name, alphabet, and numbers. And she also asked him to become more independent in terms of using the washroom, cleaning things up, and so forth.

Sam

Family Background: Unlike the other two families in this study, Sam lived in an extended family environment until last spring when his grandparents moved out of his home and into a nearby apartment. They still come to Sam's house for every meal and spend lots of times with their grandchildren. Thus, Sam's life has been greatly influenced

by his grandparents, especially his grandmother. Because Sam's mother has been working since his birth, the grandmother has played a major role in Sam's early childrearing. Even when Sam's mother was at home, Sam usually spent most of his time with his grandmother. The fact that there is not enough time for Sam and his parents to talk and play together is of concern to Sam's mother. She is worried about the educational disadvantage her children may experience because of this lack of interaction. Recently she began to seriously consider her English.

> I think that I need much more time with my children. Since they were born, I have been busy trying to make money. I had to earn money to build a more solid foundation to live in this country. At first I thought that to prepare an economic foundation was the most urgent task for us. So I worked and worked and worked. But now I begin to question myself - what is the more important thing in our life... And also I feel that I need to spend much time and energy to improve my English for the long future of myself and my children. I am waiting for the chance to go to English school which is offered by Alberta Government for the immigrants from non-English speaking countries (Sept. 3).

Sam's father is working as a taxi driver and Sam's mother was working in a factory which made paper boxes, but she quit her job last September (1985) to go to the English school. Sam's father seems to have an irregular everyday life as he appears to work whenever he feels like working. He usually works at night and sleeps during the day. Thus he does not have much chance to meet or talk with his children.

Sam has one elder sister, Mary, who is in the same class as Susan (Ricky's sister). Mary is a very quiet and shy girl, unlike Susan. Mary and Susan attended the same

playschool and are close friends. Although Mary is about one year older than Sam, she needs and asks for more care and attention from her mother than Sam does. Sam's mother was saying, "Mary acts like a younger sister of Sam. Rather Sam looks more independent and self-responsible."

Characteristics of Sam and His daily Life: Sam was born in February, 1981, was reared largely by his grandparents, has never been seriously ill, and he attended playschool last year. From my conversation with Sam's mother, I sense that she is still very much oriented to the Korean way of living. Sam slept with his mother until he started kindergarten and used to be carried on his grandfather's back from the playschool.

According to Sam's mother, Sam plays very actively and is obstinate. If he thinks that his behavior is right, he openly expresses his assertion. But when he realizes that he did something wrong, he is willing to accept it and receive punishment. He is orderly in his manner and does not mind doing things for others.

> At the block corner, Sam was playing by himself with two plastic cars while three other children were building a train. When the teacher turned off the lights, the children started to clean up. Before putting all the blocks away, the three children left the rug. Sam put all the blocks away alone, which he had not even touched. He was the last child who came to the rug (Sept. 25).

Sam spends much time by himself at home. Although his grandparents stay with him, they are not actively involved in Sam's play. When his sister comes home from school, he then has a playmate.

Educational Attitude of Sam's Parents: Sam's parents seem to feel proud of their Korean tradition and try to pass this culture onto their children. For example, they try to teach them to care about other people, to respect their elders, and concede to others. Sam's mother states:

> I do not think we need to put the child in a separate room to cultivate the independence of the child from a young age. If you give him enough loving care, he will naturally grow up as an independent person and at the same time always preserve almost unconditional love from his parents in his mind. I think that we are the examples. Although we were raised in a typical Korean culture, we do not rely on our parents. Rather we try to help and support them. We always think about our parents and worry about their health and well-being even though we are living too far away from them (Sept. 3).

She also hopes that Sam can "adjust properly to the new environment of kindergarten and be a good student who follows well the teacher's instruction." She said that she did not teach Sam or prepare him in any special ways for kindergarten because "Sam did not show any particular problems during his playschool and also can write his full name."

Sam's mother encourages her children to use Korean at home. She says that to speak English fluently is necessary but we should never forget our language. For herself, she strongly feels that she has to learn more English to live in Canadian society. Until recently she was not concerned about her English, but she is beginning to realize the necessity of being able to use fluent English.

School Settings

The two schools in this study, Geoffery School and Moonlight School, were located on the South-East side of Edmonton. This area began to be developed around ten years ago and many immigrants from other countries, particularly from Asian countries, reside here. Most of the families were young, so there was a higher enrollment in the elementary schools around this area than other areas of the city. There was a high ratio of students to teachers in these schools and all the parents in this study complained about this problem. They wanted to move from this area as soon as possible because of the concern about their children's education. Many of the families in this area of the city were earning their living by doing physical labor like welding or construction work.

At the time of this study, the total enrollment for Geoffery School was 579 and was 450 at Moonlight School. The principals of two schools were quite open when I initially contacted them regarding this study and were willing to cooperate if the teacher did not mind. Both of the principals' offices were located near the center of the main school building. In the case of Moonlight School, the principal often came into the classroom with visitors and introduced them to the children and teacher, explained about the activities, classroom environment, and so forth. I did not observe the principal at Geoffery School doing this.

The two kindergartens in these schools were very similar in terms of organization of time, theme selection, work-oriented approach, cultural diversity, parent participation, and so forth. In the following description, some of the common aspects as well as the unique characteristics of each classroom will be introduced.

Daily activities in both of the kindergarten classrooms were based on a theme approach and had regular time schedules and daily routines. The themes and regular time schedule of each day for the first four months of school were as follows:

Themes

Geoffery School

September: Bear, Shapes, Safety

October: Fall, Thanksgiving, Halloween

November: Hospital

December: Christmas

Moonlight School

September: Bear, Hospital

October: Thanksgiving, Halloween

November: Pets

December: Christmas

Time Schedule

Geoffery School (12:45 to 2:55 on Thursday and 12:45 to 3:35

the rest of week)

opening: about 20 minutes

centers: about 45 to 60 minutes

clean-up: about 10 to 15 minutes

recess: daily for 15 minutes

gym: 30 minutes on Mondays and Fridays

library: 30 minutes on Thursdays

music/ theme activities/ storytime: 20 to 30 minutes

closing: 3:35 (Thursday at 2:55)

Moonlight School (8:45 to 11:35 A.M.)

calendar, the assembly (only on Wednesday): 15 minutes

gym (calendar only on Wednesday): 15 minutes

center time (Monday, Wednesday, Friday), large group(Tuesday and Thursday): 30 minutes

center time (Monday, Wednesday, Friday), music (Tuesday and Thursday): 30 minutes

recess: 15 minutes

snack: 15 minutes

story: 15 minutes

learning games and songs and clean up (Monday, Wednesday, Friday), library (Tuesday and Thursday): 30 minutes

Along with the themes and time schedule, the general atmosphere of the two classrooms was strictly structured and

work-oriented. Each set up some work in relation to the theme, usually two different activities, and required every child to finish these tasks within a certain period. Only after the children finished their designated tasks could they have 'center time.' Each classroom was also strict in terms of its time schedule. When it was the pre-determined time to move to another activity, none of the children were allowed to continue with what they had been doing.

As special activities, both schools had field trips to a hospital and a fire station and to the museum at Geoffery School in conjunction with the theme. Both of the schools had a Halloween party and a Christmas concert. On these days the children became excited and agitated.

In both schools, one teacher aide helped the teacher prepare and set up the activities and directed the children when they were making crafts or doing games during 'center time.' Except when they were directly involved in helping children with some activities, they usually did not stay in the classroom, and they worked in the staff room copying things or preparing materials for activities. Parent involvement was encouraged in both classrooms. By the middle of September the time schedule for each volunteer parent was already set up until Christmas. The main role of the parent helper was to prepare the activity materials and help the children play games or make some crafts. Most mothers wanted to be helpers in the classroom so that they could have an opportunity to observe their own child in school.

There were 27 children (boys;19, girls;8) in the afternoon kindergarten class at Geoffery School and 25 (boys;13, girls;12)in the morning class at Moonlight School. In each school there was a somewhat diverse cultural composition with families from China, India, Vietnam, and Korea to mention a few. In the kindergarten at Geoffery School, only Jason was from Korea. There were also two boys and one girl from China, one boy from Vietnam, one boy and two girls from India, and one native Indian boy. The teacher in this school mentioned that she was having a difficulty in teaching some of them. She said that they were too active and made trouble in the classroom. In the other school, Moonlight School, there were fewer ethnic minority children than in Geoffery School. There were two Korean boys, Ricky and Sam, one girl from India and a girl from China. The teacher did not feel there were any special problems regarding these minority children, although some children were not open and did not talk much because of their cultural background or language limitations. The teacher felt they worked hard and tried to learn as many things as possible.

Teacher's Beliefs and Objectives

Geoffery School

Mrs. Sanders, the kindergarten teacher of Geoffery School, taught in various schools for five years in

part-time positions or for teachers on maternity leave. She was presently teaching only in the afternoon kindergarten, which was Jason's class. She was born in Edmonton and lived on the North side of the city for most of her life. Thus she felt strange working on the South side. She often felt that she did not belong in this school and was not comfortable around the other staff members. She was appointed to this school one week after classes had started and was not quite ready to teach this year. She shared the classroom with the morning class teacher and felt that she did not have much freedom to prepare or change the classroom environment. These situations contributed to her feeling of dissatisfaction with her teaching this year.

She expressed her own beliefs about kindergarten education and the main purpose of it.

> My philosophy is to take each child from where he is and take him as far as we can. Some children start with so few skills in the kindergarten that they may not progress as far as someone who started out with more skills. You have to treat each child individually. You never ask a child to come up to the front and speak if you know that they are painfully shy. It could be such a horrible experience for them and damage them for a long time. So you really have to treat each child individually (Dec. 10).

> [The main purpose of kindergarten education is] for most of them, to become familiar with the school, how to get along with children of that age, share, how to do some basic skills such as cutting, coloring, listening to the lesson, getting dressed; very basic things, so that when they go to grade one it's not such a big deal for them to start their education (Dec. 10).

She also believed that kindergarten age children were able to learn to obey and should be taught to do so. (in the

booklet, *All About the Kindegarten Program* which the teacher made for the parents in October)

Moonlight School

For Mrs. Morrison, the teacher at Moonlight School, this was her third year of teaching. She seemed quite satisfied with her teaching this year. She felt she was just at the beginning stage of teaching and wanted to learn as much as possible. She maintained that she was learning and changing every year. She also said that she was really excited and challenged by her profession. She was teaching as a full-time teacher, covering two kindergarten classes, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. She was newly appointed to the school this year.

She saw the main objective of kindergarten as follows;

> ...developing the total child, that's physically, socially, cognitively, culturally, emotionally; These are the five things that compose the check list the school board has to cover what we are doing. The children are growing in each of these areas and some of them develop more in one area than in others; so maybe you need to try to encourage their social skills, their emotional skills, physical skills, depending on the child. So as much as possible, we try to suit the program to the children and that's the reason for the learning centers (Dec. 18).

She also believed that the main role of the educational system was to meet the needs of society. The purpose of school was to help people fit into society.

> School is a reflection of society....The children should learn some basic things to live in this society. Although they do not like it now, we have to teach them. That's the society and our life (Dec. 18).

Physical Description

Geoffery School

The kindergarten classroom in Geoffery School was relatively small, dark, and cool in comparison with the setting at Moonlight school. It had a window at one corner, but this window did not provide enough light for the whole classroom. The room was colorfully decorated with children's pictures, art work, charts, and so forth. There were small-sized chairs and three round tables; but, this was not enough furniture to accomodate all of the children. This classroom also had a public address system which was connected to the principal's office. The function of this system was to inform the teacher or the teacher aide of some formal notices or personal phone calls. Name labels were attached on various items such as the chair, window, sink, desk, and lego set.

There were two bulletin boards and one chalk board which surrounded three sides of the classroom. One board was the theme board and it was periodically changed. On one small part of this board and on the window were a calendar, a chart for 'today's V.I.P.,' and a weather chart which were used for the everyday routine when the class started. The other two boards were used to display the children's art works.

The cubby holes and a shelf for lego were right in front of the door. Usually children's shoes, mittens, art

work, and so forth, were scattered around this area.

The carpeted area was set up right behind the cubby holes and beneath the theme board. A small chair for the teacher was placed at one corner and beside the window. This area was used for whole group activities such as taking attendence, reading stories, assigning 'today's V.I.P.,' teaching songs, having snacks, and so forth. The children's attempts to make noise or to move to other spots could lead to being reprimanded by the teacher. The form of punishment used ranged from having to stand by the door or the sink to sitting by the teacher.

A record player was located in one corner of this rug area. The set of headphones were out of order when the school year started so only one child at a time could listen to the record with a headphone. However several children would often sit together around the record player and listen to songs or stories without the headphone. The teacher did not seem to mind the somewhat loud sound from the record player.

On the rug in the opposite the record player was a big wooden square box, containing various shapes of blocks. Thus when it was center time, most of the space in the rug area was usually occupied by the blocks, several children, and was the focal point for lots of noise.

Beside the block box was a long wooden shelf which crossed the area and roughly divided the room into the 'rug area' and the 'working area.' Books, records, puzzles, and

games were on this shelf. As it was a little bit high for the children to touch anything on the top, the teacher used this area to put things for her own use.

On the other side of the rug area, there were three tables (one round and two square ones) which the children used to work on the tasks given by the teacher. The center table was always used by the teacher aide. When she said, "Come to my table," the children would go to this table. Another square table near the sink was used by the teacher to direct some individual or small group activities. The remaining round table was used for puzzles and games.

At one corner of the working area were sand trays and water trays. Both of them had similar kinds of materials such as plastic cars, sieves, funnels, and different kinds of containers. The teacher's big desk was facing all these areas. The desk was shared with the teacher's aide who would usually sit there and prepare materials. The sink was beside the teacher's work table and the paint easels were located near the sink.

The house corner, which was located by the door, was walled in by the cubbies and the long wooden shelf. Various kinds of kitchen appliances, clothes, purses, dishes, cups, and so forth were squeezed in one big bag and one wooden cupboard. This space was not sufficient for more than five people and was always crowded with children and all of their play materials. Thus the children in the house corner usually used additional areas like the rug or the other side

of the cubby holes.

Moonlight School

The initial impression of this classroom was that it was bright and contained a good selection of materials, equipment, and supplies. All the walls were decorated with the colorful pictures, letters, numbers, and charts. There was also a public address system in use which linked the classroom to the principal's office. Usually the system was used to inform the teacher and the teacher aide of the official matters or private phone calls. This line of communication was initiated from the principal's office and the teacher could only answer to it.

There were large bulletin boards running along two walls. On one bulletin board there were usually brightly colored pictures related to a teacher-selected theme. The other bulletin board, which was along the same wall as the window, was used by the teacher for the routinized, daily learning activities. On this board there were a calendar chart and the assigning board. Right beside was a white chalkboard which was occasionally used by the teacher to explain things.

Next to the door were two desks and chairs facing each other. One chair was for the teacher and the other for the teacher aide. The desks were always piled with papers and books. I did not see the teacher sit on her chair except to check the children's clothes when they went outside.

Right behind the teacher aide's chair was a sink which usually contained things to be washed such as paint cans, brushes, or cups. The children also used the sink to wash their hands and drink water. There were two round tables for play dough and crafts. Usually the teacher aide helped the children who were working at these tables and would walk around this area to supervise their activities.

The fish tank, paper shelves, and assigning board were used to provide an enclosure for the sand table. There were sieves, transparent funnels of different sizes, cups, and plastic containers in the sand area.

Beneath the theme board and calendar, the carpeted area was arranged for the whole group meetings with the teacher. The teacher's small chair was placed at the corner facing all the children. The children were supposed to sit along a strip of tape which outlined a circle on the floor. The teacher would meet with the whole class to start a day. The typical routine at this time was taking attendance, doing the calendar, and assigning responsibilities such as leader, monitor, pets, snack, and calendar to the children for the day. It was occasionally compulsory for all the children to do some work sheets at this time. The activity would be supervised by the teacher and the teacher aide. Show and tell, story telling, games, or the choosing of centers, were done here. The child's freedom was extremely restricted during this period. The children could not talk to each other, move to other spots, or even go to the bathroom at

this time. Almost all the disciplinary actions by the teacher happened here.

In one corner of the carpeted area was a record player with several sets of headphones. Opposite the door and near the window was the house corner which contained wooden kitchen appliances, a cupboard, a table and chairs, dishes, a doll and a cradle. A typewriter was placed on a nearby desk. Beside another window, there was a round table and a shelf set up for games and puzzles.

Filling the center of the room, there were four small square tables and several chairs for number and letter activities. This area was also used for coloring or working on worksheets. The material in this area was prepared and changed in conjunction with each different theme and the activities were linked to numbers and letters. These activities were not compulsory for all the children.

The cubby holes, mail boxes, and coat racks were located in front of the door. At the corner of the cubby holes, several different shapes of large hollow blocks and planks were ordered in the shelves along with the miniature plastic cars. There was a separate room nearby in which the water table was located.

B. Jason

Having Difficulties in Separating

Jason, unlike the other two children in this study, showed a special difficulty in the beginning stages of his new schooling when his mother was leaving the classroom. On the first day, September 4, I had arrived at the school about five minutes before class and had been chatting with the teacher in the hall. I saw Jason coming through the long hallway to the kindergarten classroom with his mother. He was clutching her hand as they walked along. This was my first meeting with Jason and his mother as they had been in Korea during the month of August, and they had just returned to Canada two days before school started. As Jason's mother and I were introduced, Jason looked around at the new people (several mothers of other children) and the new surroundings. He was now holding his mother's hand in his two hands. When the teacher suggested Jason's mother leave and come back around 11:20, Jason's face became strained and fearful. He looked up his mother and said;

J: Mom, I want you stay here.
M: No, I have to go.
J: Why?
M: Teacher said I have to go.
J: (glancing at the teacher) Ummmm (insisting obstinately)
M: Jason, the teacher is nice and there are many good friends too. Isn't that fun?
J: (no answer)

Jason's mother left and the teacher led him into the classroom. Jason was constantly looking back at his mother. Three children were sitting very quietly on the rug in the classroom. They were so quiet and motionless that I did not

even notice they were there; they looked very tense. Jason was directed to join them, which he did. They all sat very quietly and seemed to be waiting for something serious and important to happen. When Jason's mother came back after class, he dashed over and clung to her and said, "Moooom," in a coquettish tone, which I did not observe in other children when they met their mothers at the dismissal.

Jason's difficulties in separating from his mother became more apparent as his schooling proceeded during the first month. On Monday September 16, when I was entering the building through the door right beside the kindergarten classroom, I could see Jason's mother was walking along with Jason and other children in the line. The regulation was that mothers were to leave their child at the front door and the teacher would take all the children to the classroom. But this day, Jason's mother came into the classroom with him holding his hand. Eventually she was dragged into the classroom by Jason and asked a special favor of the teacher.

> M: (to the teacher) Can I stay?
> T: I am sorry. We will have a new teacher today. So we don't really have a helper. Maybe in October.
> M: (to Jason) See Jason? I have to go.
> J: (grasping his mother's coat more tightly and almost crying)
> M: (putting the 'inside shoes' on Jason's feet, wiped tears and hugged him) You are good boy, right? Work hard and listen carefully to the teacher's instruction, O.K.? Say bye to Mommy.
> J: (standing and looking down to the floor for a while without any words) Bye (in a very feeble voice).

After his mother left, Jason went to the rug, as he had been doing since the beginning of his schooling. He looked almost

absent-minded, waiting for the teacher's order. At the dismissal time, I asked Jason's mother why Jason was in such a bad mood at the day. She said that probably he felt lonely in the new environment and thus wanted to stay with her.

Jason's reluctance to be separated from his mother became more intensified. On September 19, Jason was trying to make his mother come into the classroom by pulling on her hand. Jason's mother was trying to free his hand and was saying;

M: I have to go, Jason.
J: I want go with you to home (beginning to cry).
M: I am not going to be at home because I have to go some other place to do my own work.
J: Then I can play with Denny at home.
M: Denny went to the school, too. I will count five and then go, O.K.? (after counting, Jason's mother left)
J: Mommy (crying very hard and running out to the hall).

I took Jason into the classroom and the teacher aide came over to Jason who was almost screaming, and said," What happened, Jason?" Tapping his shoulder, she said, "Shhhh, no more crying." Jason calmed down somewhat but still was sobbing quietly. When the teacher aide left and I hugged him, Jason began to cry hard again. I tried to appease him, saying, "Mommy will be here pretty soon." He was screaming and screaming. Finally the teacher came to Jason and pulled him to the rug by his hand. She said, "Jason you have to go to the library." Jason immediately stopped screaming and was told to sit on the rug, which he did.

I did not observe other children who cried like Jason when their parents left the classroom. For Jason, who had

been with his mother almost all the time, it was very hard to be left alone in the unfamiliar surroundings.

Feeling of Superiority

As soon as the kindergarten started, the cognitive aspect of the classroom activity became manifested. On the first day when the teacher was distributing the name tag to each child, she asked the children, "Who can say what this shape is?" Nobody answered. She taught the names of several different shapes (triangle, rectangle, square, circle) and then gave them the name-tag. After the teacher had taken attendance, two children were sent to the principal's office with the attendance slip. During this time the teacher asked the children who remained in the classroom to start counting from one on. The voices of all the children were mixed up as very few of the children seemed to be able to count correctly. When the teacher and the children counted up to 39, the teacher waited to see whether or not the children could continue after 39. All the children were quiet. All of sudden, Jason said, "Forty." The teacher commented, "Oh very good, Jason." All the children looked toward Jason and he smiled, which I had not seen him do in the classroom. The words, 'Fifty' and 'Sixty' were also provided by Jason and gave him a chance to feel superior to other children.

Jason could read, although not fluently. For show and tell time, the teacher made cardboard signs on which five or six children's names were printed. Every morning the teacher

held up one board in front of the children and asked them to read the name on it. One month after kindergarten began, only Jason could read the names of the children on the board. The teacher always praised him; "Jason, you are a very good reader." Usually Jason looked around at other children and seemed to feel very proud of himself.

Jason's sense of superiority was often encouraged in the other contexts, too. On October 1, after finishing two work tasks, coloring the safety paper and tracing different shapes of leafs using the only five designated colors, some children were playing at the various centers until it was home time. Richard's mother, the day's helper, urged the children to stop playing and to get a book. "This is not the time to play like that. Go and get the book. Read it right there" (pointing to the small space right in front of the door). Jason was also forced to sit by the door and read a book. As he was just opening one book, I sat beside him and asked, "Can you read it, Jason?" Jason replied in a confident tone, "Yeah, I can." I asked him to read it and he started to read somewhat stutteringly. Richard's mother, who had been looking at Jason, said to me, "Oh, he is quite a good reader. Good for you, Jason." Jason's voice became stronger. He said, after finishing the book, "I can read another book, too." He seemed to feel very proud of himself.

Jason had various informal interactions which made him feel superior to other children in this letter-oriented classroom environment. Jason, Richard, and Kay were talking

about Halloween as they sat on the rug.

> Kay: You know what, I am going to be a Wonder Woman at Halloween.
> J: I am going to be an owl (turning his head upward to the board and looking at the pictures about Halloween). Hey see, it's Halloween.
> Richard: Where is it?
> J: Right there (pointing to the written word, Halloween, on the board).
> R: How do you know the letter?
> J: I know it (Oct. 28).

From these experiences, Jason began to find a different meaning of 'being able to read' in the school life. Before going to school, he did not really care about the fact that he could read, "Probably because he was not put in a situation where he could find any significance in it." Jason's mother continued;

> But now, he seems to feel very proud of being able to read. He also said once, "Mommy, only *I* can read in the school" (JM, Oct. 15).

Jason was comparing himself with other children in terms of his ability to read and was sensing a feeling of superiority. This may be more openly stimulated in the cognitively oriented classroom.

Nothing Funny

> When I asked Jason what he did in the school, he always said that he did not do anything. So I asked him, "How come you did not do anything?" Jason just replied, "Nothing funny at all" (JM, Sept. 20).

> On September 30, the children were singing the good bye song which they sang at dismissal time.
> We are leaving
> We are leaving
> We had some fun
> We had some fun...

> Kay, standing beside Jason, was whispering into

> Jason's ear, "No, I did not have any fun." Jason agreed, "Me, either," exchanging a clandestine smile with Kay.

Jason could not have fun in the school. When he said that he did not do anything, that meant he did not do anything 'funny' or meaningful for him, as shown in the above conversation between Jason and his mother. Jason's 'what' was different from the 'what' his mother was asking about. For sure, Jason did things which would have meaning to his mother, but these activities did not seem to be meaningful to him. Jason's 'what' was something meaningful or significant within his own world. Hence, he could not help but say that he did "nothing funny."

As Jason's experience of schooling went on, he became more silent about his school life, especially about the learning activities. Jason's mother said:

> He talks about school much less than before. Originally he was not so expressive when I asked about his school life. But these days he never talks about school before I ask. If I keep on asking what he learned in the school, he just replies, "you know what I did." He talks a lot about other things like toys and his friend, Denny, but not about school (JM, Oct. 20).

Jason seemed to think that his mother already knew what he was supposed to do in the school so he did not have to tell her about it. On October 7, Jason was coming back from the gym class which I missed. We had a little conversation;

> O: Did you have a fun in the gym?
> J: No, how come we can have fun?
> O: What do you mean by that?
> J: My Dad said I am not supposed to have fun at school. I have to work.
> O: Oh, so you do not have fun in the school?
> J: No.

O: What did you do in the gym?
J: Doggy bone (not clear), no fun at all.

Jason knew what he was supposed to do at school. They were not to be 'funny' or fun things; rather he was to do things which could be called 'work'; things which were usually boring and not 'funny' for him.

Most of the activities in the school were not much fun for Jason. Moreover, he knew that he had to follow whatever he was instructed to do. Sometimes Jason found that some activities were really uncomfortable for him to follow the way that the teacher directed. But he did them at least in front of the teacher or in the classroom. On September 30, all the children were making a paper bear, which was linked to the theme of the week, during their center time. The teacher gave each child two small round cereals and lots of wool strings for the bear's body. The children were to cut the bear along the line and then put on the eyes and wool string to make a bear. I was sitting beside Jason and he was just about to attach the round cereals onto the eyes of the bear. Suddenly he paused his hand and asked me, "I don't like this. Do I have to put this on?" So I advised, "Well you better ask the teacher." Jason thought for a while and then said, "Well I will do it now, but when I get home, I will take this out." Jason did not ask the teacher whether he could be allowed to do something which did not coincide with the teacher's direction. He just did it the way he was told to do. But he intended to change the thing which made him uncomfortable when he was away from the school and the

teacher's supervision.

Jason also began to learn that he had to follow whatever he was instructed to do and 'never mind why.' On October 30, Jason was coloring a 'color by number' sheet with Richard on the rug. The children were instructed to color each divided part of the whole picture of the cat according to the assigned number and color of each part. The assigned numbers ranged from 1 to 5 and as a whole each number was given to lots of parts of the cat except the number 3 which had only one spot for the nose of the cat. After finishing up to the number 2 spots, Jason just started to color the spot for number 3. He posed for a while and seemed to look for something on the paper. Finally he talked to Richard in a somewhat curious voice.

> J: Richard, see there is only one number three. It's funny. How come it can be like this (constantly looking for some other spots for number three).
> R: Who cares, just do it as the teacher says.
> J: Yeah, you're right. Ummmm (He appears to have lost the direction in his coloring work) Now what? Oh, I have to know what color is number four.

Jason approached the paper which the teacher had posted indicating what color should be used for each number. Jason came back to his spot, murmuring, "Green for number 4." Then he bent over to his paper on the floor and picked up the green crayon which he had been keeping for his own use. He started to color. Jason was becoming a person who just did whatever he was required to do. The teacher directed situations were too powerful for him to resist or to object.

Jason's feeling of nothing funny continued up to Christmas. He never said that he was having fun or enjoying the school activity. Whenever I asked him, he said "boring and boring."

> These days he more often says that schooling is boring and thus he hates to go to school. Apparently he still goes to the school every day, but he seems to feel very bored in the school. Especially he hates coloring or making some art crafts, but most of the work he is doing in the school seem to be of this nature (JM, Dec. 10).

On December 11, after finishing making a candy cane which was his assigned work, Jason was wandering around to look for a center to go with Richard. The teacher came up and suggested to both of them, "Jason and Richard, why don't you try those games?" She was pushing on Jason and Richard's backs as she directed them to the game table. Jason accepted the teacher's strong suggestion and started to play an alphabet matching game with Richard. Jason did not seem to be very involved in the game. He was touching the game board, but he looked as if he was thinking about other things. Finally he stood up and said, "It's too boring." He seemed to have said this almost unconsciously.

Being Called

Each week the teacher set up two main activities, along with the theme of the week. Every child was required to finish these activities within the week. The teacher referred to these activities as 'work.' Usually the activities were a form of crafts designated to 'teach' the

children some cognitive skills such as shape, color, number, or the like. This 'work' was done during the center time.

Before the center time began, the teacher requested the teacher aid to call the names of five or six children to do certain tasks at her table which was in the center of the room. The teacher aide had a list of names of all the children so that she could know who had done which task and when. She would call several children's names and ask them, "Come to my table, quick." The children whose names were called by the teacher aide would go to the table, sit on a chair, and wait very quietly until the teacher aid gave them their 'work.' Before she would give them their task, she would usually exemplify one child who was sitting very quietly. For example, "Sabel, you are so quiet. I wish everybody can sit so quietly like Sabel." Then she would distribute the paper to the children and explain how to do the work with the paper; what to cut, which part should be glued, which color should be used for a certain part, and so on.

The teacher herself would also call five or six other children to her table which was located near the sink. The rest of the children were free to choose a center. They had to be careful in choosing the center, because each center had a maximum number of children who were allowed to play there. If the child was lucky, s/he could go to the center which s/he wanted, although sometimes children had to give up their preference if the center was full. However, as soon

as one spot became empty at the 'work table,' one child who was playing at the center was called by the teacher or by the teacher aide. The teacher was not concerned about what the child was doing at that time and just called the name. The child was to stop whatever s/he was doing and go to the work table. Usually Jason did not like to be called, as many other children did not.

> The teacher said loudly to the teacher aide who was sitting on her desk, "Mrs. G., could you call the names of six children who will make the traffic light?" Jason was muttering, "I hope they won't call me" (Sept. 30).

> Jason was making something with plastic toys on the rug. The teacher aide called him, "Jason, come over here." Jason seemed to feel frustrated and walked to the teacher aide's table, often looking back to the things which he was leaving behind. The teacher aide said, "O.K., Jason, cut only five fat turkeys and everything else goes in the garbage." Jason cut them and said, "Mrs. G., I am done." The teacher aide said, "O.K., Jason, now you can get a brown crayon and color your turkeys" (Oct. 15).

Jason seemed to become familiar with certain instructions from the teacher or the teacher aide about his work such as what color to use, what order to follow, and so forth. This seemed to make Jason bewildered when he was allowed to make his own decision. On October 21, coming back from the field trip to the fire station, every child was handed in a fire booklet and then told to color in it. Jason said to Richard,

> J: What color? (to Richard)
> R: Any color.
> J: (looking at me) Can I use any color?
> O: Yes, I think so.
> J: O.K., I like it (beginning to color).

On November 18, the Sunday school teacher at his church

distributed a small booklet for the children to color. Jason asked her;

J: Teacher, what color do I have to use for the bird?
T: Maybe, yellow or green.
J: Yellow or green (repeating to himself as he started coloring the bird with the yellow crayon).
O: Why don't you use any color you like?
J: No, you have to ask the teacher, first.
O: Why?
J: I don't know.

When the children were waiting to be assigned to a center, they wanted to be called as soon as possible, because they knew that later there would not be many centers left from which they could choose. Although one child was lucky to be called quickly by the teacher, sometimes there still was not much choice, because the teacher requested each child not to go to the center which s/he had been to already that week. The children were forced to choose some specific centers they had not been to within the week, regardless of their own interests at the moment. On September 19, the teacher gave Jason two choices, story or lego. But Jason asked a special favor of her, which he usually did not do;

J: Can I go sand or game?
T: You already did it, so not today. You can choose either story or lego.
J: (hesitating for a while)
T: You better hurry.
J: Lego (in a feeble voice).

The teacher often tried to control the children by not allowing them to choose a center until they became quiet or by picking a 'model' child who was sitting very quiet and still and giving him/her the first choice of a center. Jason

seemed to learn quickly that in this culture he had to be quiet to be called and allowed to play at the center. November 12, Jim was whispering something to Jason. Jason was obstructing it;

> J: Don't talk to me. We have to be quiet. She won't call me.

Experiencing Confusion

Jason was confused about the time schedule in the school until Christmas. During the first several weeks, when the teacher turned the light off to inform the children of the clean-up time, Jason looked so surprised and suddenly all the children became very quiet. He was not sure what came after center time, recess, and so forth. He did not know whether he was going to have center time on a certain day. Often he asked me or the teacher, "Are we going to have center time today?" He was not always sure where he was going when the long line of children walked somewhere through the hall.

When the children were told to change their 'inside shoes' and put on their jackets, Jason, like most of other children, usually was not sure whether it was time to go home or not. The children were regularly supposed to change their shoes and put on their coats two times a day; once at recess time and again at home time. On September 19, at recess time, the teacher asked all the children to take their shoes off and to get their jackets. When Jason was almost ready, he asked me, "Is this home time?" He did not

know why he was putting on his jacket. One day in September, I was almost running to catch up with the line and found Jason was standing by the front door. I asked him;

O: What are doing here, Jason?
J: I am waiting for my mom.
O: No, it's not home time. It's recess. Go out and play until the bell rings.
J: Oh, but, where is my buddy?
O: Your buddy did not come?
J: No.
O: It's O.K. I think you can go out by yourself.
J: No, I don't know when I have to come back. I might get lost.
O: O.K. Let's go out together.

The fact that his buddy, who had been matched to him from the beginning of the school, did not show up on this day made him more confused about the time arrangement. Furthermore, it made him feel insecure about going out of the building and mixing with so many unfamiliar children. He was worried about getting lost among them and not being able to come back to the classroom at the right time.

> When all the children were lining up for the gym class, Jason was asking Kay who was holding his hand, "Are we going to the library?" Kay, "No, we are going to the gym" (Oct. 28).

> The teacher was asking the children, "Do you know where we are going on Monday?" (They had just finished the calendar, so they were informed the day was Monday) Jason raised his hand, "Library." Teacher said," No, that's Thursday" (Nov 18).

Sometimes Jason showed confusion by asking questions about the time schedule, but not all the time. He was often just moving according to the teacher's order or walking along with other children in the line.

Feeling of Bigger

Jason, like the other two children in this study, felt he became bigger after he started going to kindergarten. At the beginning of kindergarten, Jason had a very difficult time breaking the strong bond with his mother. He did not want to be left without his mother, so he cried. After going through this difficult time, however, Jason became more independent. For Jason, who had been given a great deal of care and attention by his mother, this was an important experience for both Jason and his mother. Jason's mother said:

> Jason was remarkably sensitive and needed special care from me, probably because he was reared in that way. He could not sleep out of our house so we had to take a picture with us which was hung on the wall in his room when we went other places. Even now I spoon feed him otherwise he does not eat much and it makes me worry. Sometimes I feel I am spoiling him, but I cannot stop it (JM, Sept. 10).

Within this context, Jason was not given much opportunity to be an independent child. But after he was sent to the school, he began to feel more grown-up. Jason's mother said that she had never expressed to him any concrete expectation that he 'be grown up' and do things by himself. In a sense, Jason's mother felt afraid that Jason would become grown-up and not need her help.

> For the last week Jason frequently comes back home by himself after school. Everyday I asked him to come with his sister. But he just comes back home by himself. When I asked him, "Why don't you come with your sister?" Jason replied, "I am big now and I can come by myself" (JM, Oct. 30).

In relation to other children of a similar age, Jason seemed to like to show that he was 'big.' On October 13, the Sunday school teacher was holding up a paper turkey and asking the children;

> T: Do you know what this is?
> All the children were shouting, "Turkey."
> J: (To Emily in a low voice) I made this in my school. You didn't do it, right?
> O: How come Emily did not do it?
> J: Because she cannot go to the kindergarten. She has to be big like me (in church, Oct. 13).

Jason felt proud of the fact that he could do something in school which the younger children could not do. The other side of Jason, however, did not coincide with the feeling of 'being grown-up.' Sometimes he asked his mother for assistance and attention, like asking her to take his jacket off. He also tried to have more physical contact with his mother through behaviors such as kisses, hugs, or cling. Jason's mother went on;

> Especially when he comes back from the school, he sticks to me and asks me to do many things for him. I feel that he is trying to compensate for the lonely feeling he had at school (Oct. 30).

Thus while he felt grown-up, at the same time he wanted more care and attention from his mother.

Experiencing Getting A Partner

From the second week of Jason's school life, he followed one girl, Kay and tried to sit by her and to be her 'partner.' He usually did not play or talk with other children except Kay. When other children talked or touched him, he just ignored them and sometimes showed an explicit

dislike to them through his facial expression or saying directly, "Don't do that to me." When he was required to hold a boy's hand or stand in the boy's line by the teacher, he was very reluctant to be separated from Kay. Whenever he could, he would hold her hand or sit by her in the gym or in the hall. He would also force children apart in a group to sneak into the spot beside Kay. Moreover, he tried to follow Kay when he was choosing his center.

> The teacher asked Jason, "Where do you want to go, Jason?" Jason replied without any hesitation, "Puzzle." He hurried to follow Kay who had decided to go puzzle table prior to Jason. Speaking to Kay's back, he said, "Hey, Kay, I'm gonna play with you" (Sept. 16).

Many other children also liked Kay and tried to sit by her, which sometimes bothered her. But she always smiled, even when she was saying, "No," or "don't." Because of Kay's generosity, the children usually did not take her complaint or rejection seriously.

> Four children were trying to sit by Kay. She said, "Too many children are surrounding me. I don't know what to do" (a smile on her face). Peter stepped on Kay's feet as he hustled through the other children. Kay was complaining about it, but still with a warm voice, "Peter, you are hurting me" (Sept. 19).

As the above description illustrates, Kay was a girl whom many children liked and who had a warm temperament. She had her own preference of a close friend, Richard. Thus, Kay did not care much about Jason, although she did not express it in a definite way. Although Jason was noticably concerned about Kay, she wanted to sit by Richard and hold his hand. Thus Jason tried not to be isolated from the two of them.

> Jason was taking his jacket off in the hallway as he walked in the line to the classroom. He kept his eyes on Richard and Kay. He stood beside them at the coat rack watching until they finished taking off their jackets. When they finished, Jason suggested, "Let's go now." Actually Richard and Kay were talking to each other without paying any attention to Jason. Jason continued following them into the room (Oct. 1).

Richard was also a gentle and cooperative boy. He and Kay were willing to play with Jason. But, Richard usually took the initiative in their play and Jason and Kay would follow his direction. I never observed Jason and Kay arguing about Richard's suggestions.

Within this whole dynamic context, Jason was enjoying a meaningful part of his school life. The three of them seemed to play well together; but, when each child was requested to get 'a partner' and stand in the line, Jason often experienced a critical moment of isolation from his group.

> When each child was asked to get a partner in the line for the gym class, Jason was rejected by Kay and Richard. Kay and Richard held each other's hand and Jason was left alone. His face became miserable and at that moment another girl, Connie, came up and tried to hold his hand. Jason shook off her hand. Connie shouted to the teacher, "Teacher, Jason doesn't want to get a partner." The teacher did not seem to hear it. Jason was blaming Connie in an angry voice, "I can hold your hand when we are ready to leave. You don't have to tell her." Jason looked so disappointed (Oct. 21).

Up to Christmas, Jason had to go through this kind of experience when he was required to get 'a partner.' There were few problems when they could all play together, but when one of them had to be isolated from their group, Jason was always the child who was sacrificed.

Experiencing Teacher

Jason had formed a certain image of the teacher before he went to the kindergarten. He had been told by his parents that the teacher was a good person who would teach children things they did not already know. When I asked Jason's mother whether she provided Jason with any special preparation for school, she said;

> I did not do as much as I had done for his sister. Jason looks so young to me and I don't expect much from him. I just tell him to follow whatever the teacher says and listen to the teaching she gives. Actually this is what I have been telling him since he began playschool (JM, Sept. 10).

Jason has been taught at home that he has to follow the teacher's instruction and listen to what she said. He also seemed to believe that the teacher was, or rather should be, a nice person. We were talking about his teacher;

> O: How is your teacher?
> J: She is nice.
> O: What do you mean by that?
> J: I mean, ... just she is a teacher (Sept. 30).

For Jason, the teacher was not a person he could ask a special favor. On September 16, I was sitting by Jason at the game table. Jason was finishing, for the second time, all the games which had been left on the table for the day. He looked at the new game materials which were shelved beside the table. Pointing to the new games, he asked me, "Can I do those games?" I said, "Well, I guess so. Why don't you ask the teacher whether you can play with those or not?" He was looking around to find the teacher. Thinking for a while, he shook his head. I suggested to him to try it

again, but he said, "No, I don't want it." And then he started to play with the game which he already had finished. When I suggested to him that he get permission from the teacher first, he appeared to understand that he needed a 'special favor' from the teacher to play with these new game materials which the teacher did not intend to set up as part of the activities for the day. He hesitated for a while trying to decide whether he should go and ask her about the games. Finally he made up his mind to stay with the old games rather than attempt a new adventure. If Jason had seen the teacher as someone whom he could question, he could have asked her for new games as he seemed tired of the old ones.

The teacher was also an authoritative person who could stop Jason's fierce crying which his mom and I could not do. As was described earlier when Jason was separated from his mother, he cried very hard. I had hugged him and tried to appease him, but he just cried harder. The teacher approached him and as she pulled on his hand, said, "Jason you have to go to the library." Jason soon stopped crying and then sat on the rug without saying a word. Nobody who was in the classroom could stop his eruption of feelings except the teacher. Only the teacher could do that.

As the kindergarten year progressed, Jason would talk more about school. He began to use negative words to describe his schooling and his teacher. He was often saying to his mother that school was boring. One day I was talking with Jason about the teacher;

J: I do not like my teacher, because she always gives us boring stuff.
O: So you do not like her?
J: No, but she is nice.
O: Why?
J: Because, ... My mom said she is a nice person (Oct. 31).

Jason always asked permission of the teacher when he wanted to do things such as go to bathroom or change center. Not many children asked the teacher whether they could move to another center during center time. They just moved to another center and played there. The teacher also did not make it explicit that the children had to inform or ask her when they wanted to change their activity. I never observed Jason change a center without getting permission from the teacher. On November 16, after checking his plan book, Jason was asking the teacher;

J: Teacher, I've got only one center left.
T: What is that?
J: Water, but it is closed.
T: O.K., then get a book and read it.
(Jason was looking at a book).
O: Jason, what is this book about?
J: I don't know... I don't like this.
O: Do you want another book?
J: No, I want to play with Kay and Richard (looking at two of them who were playing at the sand tray).
O: Why don't you go there and play?
J: No, I can't. Mrs. Sanders did not allow me to play there. If I go, she will be angry to me.

For Jason, the teacher was a person who had a special role and thus could control his activities.

C. Ricky

Getting Excited

Ricky, unlike the other two children, Sam and Jason, became very excited as the day of going to kindergarten came closer and closer. He asked his mother several times during the summer what day he would go to school and how long he had to wait. Ricky's mother described his eagerness to go to school as follows;

> Before going to school, Ricky needed to finish two immunizations. Usually Ricky feels so scared about the needle. When he had the first one, he was so scared and cried. And two weeks later when he was supposed to have the second one, he was trying not to feel scared and said, "Mom, if I have this one, I can go to school, can't I?" He then volunteered to go to the clinic (Sept. 2).

Ever since Susan, his sister, began kindergarten last year, Ricky has had a strong desire to go to school. He started playschool at the same time Susan entered kindergarten. The playschool and kindergarten were in an opposite direction to each other. Whenever he had to turn in an opposite direction to his sister, he would ask his mother, "Mom, when can I go to that way?" Moreover, when Susan brought home some crafts or worksheets which she had done in school, he always questioned, "Mom, when can I make those kinds of things?"

As the new life in the kindergarten started, Ricky's excitement became elevated at home because of being in the 'real school.' When he came back from school after his first day of kindergarten, he remained agitated for the whole day. His mother said,

> He seemed to be a different child during the whole day. He did not eat much and his mind seemed to be away. When he was talking, his voice was unsteady (RM, Sept. 7).

His mother felt there was one major reason he had been so eager for school to start. Ricky's mother commented:

> He has always been asking me to give him a baby so that he can play with him. Usually he stays at home with his grandmother when I am away and does not have enough friends. His only playmate is his sister but when her friends come to my house, Ricky tends to be isolated from them. Thus, he seems to need a friend he can play with. Maybe in the school he can be happy with many children (RM, Sept 7).

Whatever the reason was, finally Ricky could go to a real school and was so excited about it. He was happy with the school and enjoyed the experience. His mother said:

> Ricky enjoys going to school. When I asked him about school, he said that he liked school and his teacher was nice too. Actually I was worried about him, even though he wanted to go to school. As I said, he is a shy child and could not adjust to his playschool. But, this time, he seems to be different. He wants to go to school and enjoys it (RM, Sept 30).

Ricky was enjoying his school life at least during the first month.

Feeling of Grown-up

When Ricky asked his mother when he could go to school, his mother said, "When you are big enough like Susan, you can go to school." Ricky had been told that when he became a big boy, he could go to school.

When Ricky started school, it meant for him that he was now grown-up and he was not a small child any more; he expressed this feeling in a variety of ways. On the first

day of school, the teacher asked the children to draw a picture about themselves. Ricky drew about himself as a person who had very long legs. I later realized that the picture meant that he was big enough to have long legs now so that he could walk to the school. On October 9, I visited Ricky's house and I suggested that he draw whatever he liked. He did not have a clean sheet of paper so he started to draw in a small space which was left in a used one. He was drawing two people and talking:

> R: These are Sam and myself. This was when we were babies (pointing to the legs of two).
> O: Oh, are they babies?
> R: Yeah.
> O: Why?
> R: Because we have short legs. If we are big like now, we can have long legs so that we can walk to the school (Oct. 9).

Ricky also became more independent in his daily life. At night, he voluntarily began to tell his mother that he would sleep at a certain time. Usually he went to bed when his mother asked him to. Before he started school, Ricky refused to go to bed and wanted to play more. But, after he started kindergarten, he would wake up by himself and prepare for school. He cleaned up in the washroom by himself and sometimes he would try to reach things which had been placed in a high spot. Ricky's mother was commenting:

> Usually he asked me to get things like taking books from the high shelf for him, but nowadays he does not ask me and tries to do it by himself. If he can, he seems to feel very proud and says, "See mom, I can reach it by myself now" (RM, Oct. 14).

In the morning when he would leave for the school, he began to refuse to go with his mother. One day near the end of

October he suddenly said, "Mom, You don't have to come. We can go by ourselves."

Ricky was also relating the feeling of being grown-up to the fact that he was learning things at school. As was described before, Ricky had been told that if he were big like Susan, he could go to school and make crafts. Now he was finally going to school and could make the crafts. For Ricky, to be able to do this meant to feel bigger. He often wanted to teach some games which he had learned at school to his uncle and his sister, and felt so proud of himself. On October 2, his uncle visited his family. Ricky was talking to him,

> R: Uncle, you know what? Ummmm do you know the 'Doggy Bone' game?
> C: No, what is that?
> R: I can show you how to play the game.
> C: Oh, Ricky you learned a lot from school. (after practicing the game)
> R: Yeah, I can do some other games, too. You know why? Because I am big.

Ricky was connecting the school learning to the home situation and trying to show his 'bigness' by demonstrating some of the things he had learned at school during the beginning two months.

Ricky felt grown up and became more independent; he tried to do many things by himself and was proud of his accomplishments. On the other hand, however, he began to feel lonely and asked for more attention, physical contact, and love from his parents.

> These days, he often clings to me and rubs his face on me. He kisses and hugs me, saying," Mommy, I like you." He did not do that before. Probably he seems

to feel lonely (RM, Sept. 21).

He also showed more reluctance to be separated from his mother. On October 9, when I was playing with Ricky at his house, his mother was leaving to go to work at her grocery store. Ricky dashed up to her and clung to her pants. He begged, "Mom, don't go. I want to stay with you." Ricky's mother said, "Ricky, I have to go because we are supposed to receive new things in the store today." Ricky became sullen and stood for a while without saying anything. His mother said, "I know you can stay with your grandmother. I will be back soon today. You are big now, right?" When Ricky's mother left, he walked back to me and said, "I wish I can be a baby. I don't want to be big."

Later when I met his mother, she said that Ricky had been used to being left without her for long periods of time and that he usually accepted this without any complaint. Recently, however, he had changed and often asked his mother not to go to work and would phone her at work. As Ricky said, in a sense, he did not seem to want to be big. He wanted to stay a baby so that his mother would take care of him and pay attention to him. He seemed to have contradictory views of himself at this point in time; he wanted to be big as well as to remain a small child. He wanted to be big because he could go to school and feel proud. But, on the other hand, he experienced loneliness and felt that not as much care and attention were given to him.

Familiarity within Strangeness

Although Ricky was excited about going to school, he experienced various kinds of unfamiliar and new situations. From the first day, he was informed of the rules and regulations that lead to an acceptable life in the school: "Raise your hand when you want to say something"; "You have to be very quiet"; "You have to listen to the teacher"; "Don't talk to other children on the rug." Rules of this nature were not totally strange to Ricky, as he had been in a playschool for one year. But still those regulations had to be digested in a new situation, with a new teacher, a new teacher aid, and in a new physical environment, among many new classmates. I could read from his face that he was often in a tense mood and did not feel 'free' in the classroom.

Among all this 'newness' and 'uncomfortableness,' Ricky had one thing which was familiar to him. His sister, Susan, was there. On September 6, I was standing in front of the school door as Ricky came back from recess. His face was a mixture of surprise and delight as he said to me, "I saw my sister." He saw her on the playground, which had surprised him but also made him happy. He could find one of his family members in the unfamiliar playground and among many new children.

Ricky also tried to let his teacher and classmates know about his sister. One day when all the children were getting ready for home, Ricky came back into the classroom and said in a boastful voice, "Teacher, my sister is out there." On

the playground Ricky met his sister and was taking her to his classmates. He announced, "Hey, this is my sister." When he returned home from school, he reported to his mother that he saw Susan in the school and that they played together. Ricky's mother noted that "Susan did not show much interest in this event, but Ricky seemed to like it very much and be very surprised" (RM, Sept. 14).

Ricky also had an old friend in his new school, Sam who was anotner informant for this study. During the first week of school, Sam was assigned to the afternoon class by mistake. From the second week on, however, he joined the morning class which allowed Ricky to have an old friend in an unfamiliar environment. When they met in the classroom for the first time, they hugged each other joyfully. Wherever they went, they tried to stick together. They also cared about each other.

> After recess, they were sitting at the round table near the sink waiting for the snack. The teacher said, "Some of you who want a drink, can go now." Sam stood up and Ricky said, "I'll save this chair for you" (Sept. 18).

> Ricky and Sam were matching puzzles and Ricky went to the bathroom. Eric came to the puzzle table and touched the puzzle Ricky had been playing with and then Eric moved to another puzzle. Sam, who had been looking at him constantly, pulled Ricky's puzzle closer to him. When Ricky came back, he returned it to Ricky (Sept. 25).

Ricky and Sam were together whenever they were allowed. Ricky seemed to experience an emotional security by having a friend in this new environment, although Ricky was later deserted by Sam.

Having the Center Time

Ricky, like most of the children, enjoyed the center time and was very active and happy when he was allowed to play at the center he wanted. Usually he was quiet, did not talk much with other children, and was not outgoing. On the rug, Ricky often appeared bored and tired when there was a whole group meeting. He would fidget with his name tag and sometimes he looked around, touching the books or some of the pictures and cards on the wall. But when it was center time, he became lively and animated.

As can be seen from the time schedule in the previous section, center time was scheduled for only three days per week and Ricky, like most of other children, loved playing at the centers although there were some limitations and restrictions. For example, the teacher would decide the maximum number of children allowed at each center. Ricky's favorite play centers were sand and water. On October 24, I showed him a picture of the 'group meeting' area on the rug and asked him:

O: What do you do here?
R: Teacher teaches us something.
O: What does she teach?
R: Ummmm...read a story.
O: What else?
R: Some games, a-a-a-and I don't know.
O: Do you like the rug time?
R: N-o-o-o.
O: What do you like best?
R: Sand play and water.

Sometimes he had to give up playing at the sand box if he did not get a turn to select a center early in the center selection period.

Like Jason, Ricky learned a strategy to get a turn to choose his center as soon as possible. Ricky knew that, "If you are quiet, you can choose the center quickly before it is full" (Oct. 24).

During center time the teacher would call one child's name and assign him/her to the work table. The teacher did not show much concern about what the child was doing at this time. She had a list which indicated who was going to be the next child to be assigned to the work table. She just moved through the list according to the order of the names. In this classroom, the 'play' activities and compulsory work were related to the 'theme of the week.' Some games, the main purposes of which were to teach the children letters of the alphabet, colors, shapes, or some other concepts, were introduced to the children and they were asked to choose one of the games. Often there was one game which the teacher considered important. If she wanted all of the children to learn the game, she would have one group of children play the game and then call the second group to the game table. Thus the teacher's main role at center time was to supervise the movement of the whole classroom and to constantly keep her eyes on the 'list' to check to see who did the main activity and who did not. Unlike Jason's teacher, this teacher usually did not get involved in directing or in teaching the children the main activities. Instead the teacher aide and parent helper for the day directed the children at the work table.

Within this classroom culture, Ricky could not avoid being assigned to work which the teacher had set up and which he sometimes did not like. On October 9, the teacher was looking at the name list to find which children had not done the two 'tasks' of the week (making a turkey and number book). She called Ricky, "Ricky, you did not make a turkey. You need to go to the table." Later, when Ricky came back to the building toys, I asked him, "You must have had fun making the turkey." He said, "No, it's not fun at all." Ricky was usually reluctant to stop doing what he was doing at the center and move to the 'work';

> Ricky went to the listening center. Danna came from the kitchen and informed him, "Ricky, it's your turn." The teacher urged Ricky, "Ricky, you go and paint your fish." Ricky looked up at the teacher and said, "I did it already." Teacher, "No, you did not." Ricky stood up and asked me, "Can you save my spot for me? And then he said, "I wish I could come back soon." He was constantly looking back to the listening center while he was walking to the door (Nov. 13).

As Christmas drew near, Ricky became more vocal about his boredom in the school. Sometimes he said that he did not want to go to school. On December 8, Ricky and I were having a little chat in the church;

> O: Ricky, how is your school life?
> R: It's boring.
> O: What is the most boring thing?
> R: Everything.
> O: Even playing at the center?
> R: Oh, I like it, but not other things, like drawing pictures.
> O: Why do you think you have to do all those things you don't like?
> R: I don't know.

Ricky's mother was saying, "Often these days Ricky does not

want to go to the school. Especially in the morning, he wants to sleep more. He says that he is still tired" (Dec. 15).

Experiencing Time Schedule

As the new life in the kindergarten began, Ricky had to experience the 'rituals' of this particular classroom society. One such 'ritual' was that the teacher would turn off the lights to inform children of clean-up time. Then the teacher and all the children would meet on the rug, which usually led to a new activity such as going to the music room, gym or library, recess, or dismissal. But most of the children did not know when the teacher would turn off the light or where they were supposed to go next. What they did know was that when the teacher said they needed to clean up for another activity, they should do this.

Ricky was experiencing the time schedule in his own way. One day in September I was walking beside Ricky as the children were going to the music room. Ricky asked me, "Where are we going?" He did not know where he was going even though he was walking in the line. The teacher often told the children what they were going to do next when they met on the rug, but sometimes she did not tell them. Furthermore, the children did not always pay attention to the teacher so they missed what she was saying. Whatever the reason, Ricky, like many other children, did not know where he was going at that moment. Ricky often asked me after

recess or before the class started in the morning, "Are we going to have center time today?" He had no idea about when they were supposed to have the center time. This was especially true on Tuesdays and Thursdays when the time schedule was more complicated than on other days. Ricky had more conflicts following the schedule on these days. The children would go to the gym first and come back to the classroom and meet the teacher all together. Then they would line up again and go to the music room, come back to the classroom and then go out for recess. The children would spend lots of time lining up and walking somewhere on these two days. Within this complex activity schedule, Ricky was going through his own difficulties in his life in the school;

> Ricky came back from the gym and went to his locker and took out his coat. I asked him, "Ricky, where are you going?" Ricky said, "Getting ready for recess." I said, "No, this is not recess. You are supposed to have music class next" (Sept. 24).

Ricky also experienceed disappointment because of the strict time schedule. For example, when he was deeply involved in playing with cars in the sand box or making bubble in the water, the teacher would turn off the lights to let the children know it was 'tidy up time.' Ricky had to stop what he was doing, clean up quickly and go to the rug and sit on the tape. The tape was attached by the teacher for effective control of the children's movement. Just sitting on the rug was not enough. The children were required to sit on the tape which formed a big circle on the

rug.

> Ricky was building a bridge in the sand box with Eric. The teacher turned off the lights and said, "I would like you to clean up and sit on the rug." Ricky was saying to Eric, "I wish we could play more." Eric was agreeing with Ricky, "Yeah, but it's time to clean up." Ricky cleaned his hand and went to the rug immediately (Oct. 23).

Ricky often became tired in the school, especially at 'rug time' when the teacher read a story or explained the activities. I often observed that Ricky became inattentive to the teacher and looked around at things. Sometimes he would lie down on the floor, a behavior which the teacher would 'correct.' On occasion, he would murmur, "Teacher, I am tired." But nobody, including the teacher, acknowledged his complaint. The worse situation for Ricky was when he was required to get work done when he was so tired.

> After spending a long time talking about pets, which was the theme of the week, the teacher asked children to draw about their favorite pets and other related things like a pet's house, pet families, and so on. Then she gave one sheet of paper to each child who came up to her. Ricky did not move and just sat on his spot. Only Ricky was left and the teacher said, "Ricky, don't you have any idea of pets?" Ricky shook his head. The teacher said, "But you need to draw pets." Still Ricky was keeping quiet. Finally the teacher was leaving and saying, "O.K., I will leave the paper here. When you are ready, go to the table and draw." I approached him and said, "Ricky, are you tired now?" Ricky was nodding his head and said, "I want go home." a couple of minutes later, Ricky took the paper with him to one table and drew a fish (Nov. 14).

Ricky felt so tired at that time and did not want draw a picture; so initially he refused to do it. But later, he decided to go back to the flow of the classroom schedule.

Experiencing Isolation

When I first contacted Ricky's mother by phone, she said, "I doubt if our Ricky will be appropriate for your study because he is shy, not outgoing." When he was in the classroom, he did not talk much with other children, except with Sam. He played mostly with Sam, held his hand, and sat by him during September. However, Ricky began to be separated from Sam as he began to seek a new friend. Ricky wanted to go with Sam or hold his hand, but Sam did not care about Ricky's feelings.

> The teacher was distributing a name tag to each child for the music room. Sam got his first and was walking to the door to line up. Ricky grabbed his arm and said, "Sam, wait for me." But Sam just left (Sept 24).

During September, Ricky and Sam stuck together and cared about each other. When I asked Ricky about his best friend, Ricky would say, "Sam." When Sam made a new friend, he did not pay much attention to Ricky. Ricky began to be isolated from Sam. This meant that there was nobody Ricky could feel comfortable with or approach easily in the classroom. Ricky was not outgoing and active enough to make other friends. He was often left alone, even when he was doing an activity at a table with other children. He did not interact with others and just played by himself. Ricky was not active in his interpersonal relations; he seemed to be waiting for the time when someone would ask him to play. Ricky's mother described his feelings of isolation from other children;

> Last week Ricky came back from the school and said, "Nobody wanted to play with me." He was almost crying (RM, Oct. 4).

Later he began to show a certain strategy to make friends actively. On October 10, Ricky was taking a computer toy to the playground at the recess, which he had brought for 'show and tell' that day. I asked him, "Ricky, why are you taking this to the outside?" Ricky pointed to Brian who was standing beside him and, without replying, the two of them smiled at each other and ran off outside. Later they came back from recess and sat by each other at the snack table. After snack, when Ricky was going to the work table to glue the turkeys on the tree, he thrust his hand out to Brian and said, "Are you my friend?" Brian nodded his head and held Ricky's hand. The next week Ricky brought the computer toy again and was going out with two children, Brian and Glenn, for the recess. Glenn was holding the computer toy and Ricky was following the two of them. After recess, I asked Ricky, "Why did you bring this toy again? Is this for show and tell?" Ricky said, "Just because my friends like it." Ricky used the computer toy to make his friends play with him. He needed some materials to make them be his friends. But this kind of strategy did not prove to be effective over time.

The next week Ricky was alone again. Brian and Glenn were not his friends any more. At recess time when many children went out with their close friends, Ricky would often walk restlessly in the hall. He waited for someone who

would play with him on the playground. On October 24 I asked him, "Ricky, why are you staying here?" Ricky said, "I want a friend to go with me." I found one child who could be a friend with Ricky. Terry was coming over. I suggested, "Terry, why don't you play with Ricky?" Terry nodded. Ricky had been watching us. He came up and said to Terry, "Can you hold my hand?" They held their hands and went out together. Ricky looked so happy. As November approached, Ricky and Sam started playing together. One day when I walked into the classroom they were sitting by each other and talking about something. Since then, I have observed the two of them together more often.

Experiencing Teacher

> Last year when Susan was in the kindergarten, she brought a paper home which was about suggested and expected behavioral standards of children that age - like separating white and dark colored clothes before doing laundry, or to help with the cooking and washing of vegetables or tearing them. Some behaviors seemed to be hard for the children of the kindergarten age. Anyway Ricky must have heard what I was explaining to his sister about those behaviors. He also tried to follow those guidelines for himself. Sometimes he reminded Susan of those behaviors (RM, Sept. 14).

Ricky learned about school and about the teacher from his sister's experiences before he started kindergarten. According to Ricky's mother, she never forced Ricky to follow the 'expected behavior' guidelines. His mother said:

> He seemed to think that the teacher's instructions should be followed without questioning. I can remember that as a child I could not imagine questioning or acting against the teacher's expectations. Canadian people do not seem to be much

> like us. This might be from our cultural background. Ricky seems to have learned this attitude from us (SM, Sept. 7).

Actually the first thing Ricky's mother hoped for Ricky, in the beginning of kindergarten, was that he would not make any trouble in the classroom and that he would follow the teacher's instruction. On October 4, when the children were getting on the bus for the field trip to the hospital, Ricky's mother tapped the window beside Ricky and said, "Ricky, listen to the teacher well and enjoy yourself." When I heard that, I could feel the Korean tradition in terms of parents' attitudes toward the school and their children. As can be seen from the above example, Ricky had lots of exposures to this cultural attitude at home. In fact, I rarely observed Ricky acting against or resisting his teacher in the classroom.

This kind of obedience to his teacher did not necessarily mean that he personally 'liked' her. When we were talking about his teacher, he never said that he liked his teacher. Sometimes he said, "She is pretty and nice," or "She has curly hair." By saying that, he was avoiding a direct answer. When I asked him why the teacher was nice, he said, "Because she teaches us games. I like witch games" (Oct. 15). One day in the middle of November he expressed to his mother a more general reason why he thought the teacher was nice. "She is nice because she is doing a nice job." He thought that the teacher was nice, but this attitude toward his teacher may not seem to come from a very personal

relationship with her. It seemed to be based on his general image of 'a teacher.' The teacher was seen as a nice person who helped children learn. Within his home culture he had been living with this belief about teachers.

In a concrete and more specified situation, Ricky expressed his view of the place of the teacher within his world;

> Ricky asked me to 'play teacher' with him. Then he said to me, changing his voice into a somewhat dignified one, "Sit down here and I will give each of you a paper. You gonna draw yourself." And then a little bit later, "Hurry up, you have to finish this" (RM, Nov. 23).

For Ricky the teacher was someone who gave a task to the children which had to be finished within a certain time. When he was changing his voice to be a teacher, he showed something about his idea of the status of the teacher in relation with the children. The teacher had the power or authority to command children to get something done.

Learning of Being Quiet and Nice

As soon as school started, Ricky was eager to be the 'leader' who was selected by the teacher every morning. Usually the teacher would select a child who was 'very quiet and sitting still on the rug.' When she was going to select one child for the day's leader, she would say to the children, "I am looking for a quiet girl (or boy) who is sitting very nicely." At the beginning of their schooling, many children did not seem to recognize how the teacher was going to select a leader or who it was going to be. But as

the days gradually passed, many children who were interested in being a leader for the day would become very quiet and wait for the teacher's decision. In the first month, when Ricky came home from the school, one of his main concerns of that day was the fact that he could not be a leader. One day I overheard Ricky muttering, "She never saw me," when the teacher selected another child. But within this classroom culture, Ricky began to learn how he could be a leader: "If you are quiet, you can be a leader" (RM, Oct. 30). Ricky seemed to learn that a leader could be only one child among many children and that the leader should be better qualified than all others.

Starting in November, Ricky tried to finish his activities first. Ricky's mother said, "Nowadays he often says that he will beat them all" (RM, Nov. 23). I also observed that when Ricky would finish his work quickly he would say, "I beat all of them." Usually he was a fast worker, except when he was tired. As soon as he received a task from the teacher, he would hurry to find his spot and get the task done quickly. He did not seem to care about how his other classmates were doing. Many of the children would talk to each other and watch others while they were working, but Ricky usually kept his eyes on his work. After getting things done, he would go to whichever center he liked because he was the first person who was ready to choose a center. When he began to play, he would become deeply involved in what he was doing.

On November 20, when Ricky was walking to the assigning board to choose the center, I followed him and said, "You have lots of choices now." Ricky smiled and said, "Yeah, I can go everywhere." He chose sand. I followed him and asked, "Ricky, why did you hurry so with your coloring?" Ricky said, "Because, I want to beat them all." Thus, a concern of Ricky's mother was that he did not seem to work hard and sincerely. Ricky's mother was worried about that;

> The coloring and crafts which Ricky does in the school does not look good. He does not seem to do something sincerely. He just tries to finish it. So I often tell him that he does not have to finish it so fast and that he has to work more seriously. But, this attitude has not changed (RM, Oct. 24).

Ricky was put in a classroom situation in which the competition or comparison among children was stimulated by the classroom standard of 'good' or 'nice.' Within this context, Ricky was learning that if he was quieter than others, or at least as quiet as others, he would be able to do the things he wished. Furthermore, he was also applying this world view to other situations. For example, he would try to finish the required work as fast as he could so he could 'beat' other children and play with things which were fun, even though there did not seem to be any clear advantage to get things done fast.

D. Sam

Waiting for Turns

Sam, like the other children in his class, was in a situation where many children were involved as equals and there was not enough opportunity for each child to satisfy his/her own needs. Thus one inevitable experience for each child was to wait for their 'turn.'

For Sam, one of his concerns in schooling was that when he wanted to say something, he had to wait until the teacher gave him a turn. Sam raised his hand whenever the teacher allowed children to speak, but he did not get many turns to speak. Hence, during the first month in this society, Sam was putting up his hand even when the teacher did not ask a question or offer an opportunity for the children to express their own ideas. During September, Sam would raise his hand when the teacher was reading a story and explaining things to the children. The teacher did not mention anything about Sam's behavior. She just continued reading the story. But Sam was still waiting with his hand raised until he was allowed to speak. He really wanted to say something about himself, his toys, his families, or whatever. But the teacher did not seem to notice his strong desire to express his thoughts. Sometimes he moved his spot closer to the teacher so that the teacher could recognize his hand more easily.

Another situation in which Sam had to wait for his turn was when the teacher assigned the centers to each child. If his name was not called early, he would become restless and

stand on the rug to check what sort of centers were still open for him to select. When he was called later and could not choose the center which he wanted to go, he was disappointed and unsatisfied. On September 25, I could overhear him say to himself in a complaining voice, "I am always last." Of course, he was not always the last child to be called to choose his center, but he seemed to feel he was treated unfairly.

Sam's mother described an event in which Sam role-played his experience of waiting to be assigned to a center;

> Sam was playing with Mary and he was a teacher and she was a student. Mary was saying that she wanted to go to block corner and Sam said, "No, you have to wait until I call your name" (SM, Oct. 16).

Some other kinds of waiting prevailed in Sam's classroom. When the children sat at the snack table, they had to wait until everyone was present and had been served their food. Moreover, every child was to sit still and put their hands in their laps and not talk. When all these standards were met, the teacher would explain about the snack, especially when the food was not familiar to the children. And then the teacher would ask all the children to say thank you to the child who had brought the snack for the day. The children would shout in chorus, "Thank you..." All the children had to sit through this procedure before they could have their snack.

On the very first day of school, the teacher showed the children that they could find a star in an apple if they cut

it in a horizontal direction and then each child was served half an apple. As soon as a half piece of an apple was served to Sam, he stretched his hand to the apple to eat it or maybe to touch the interesting star. The teacher aid blocked his motion and said, "No, not yet," then touched Sam's shoulder. He then looked around at other children at the table and waited.

Sam was transferring this waiting behavior to his home setting;

> When we were having lunch, Sam said, "Mommy, we have to wait until the teacher says it's time to eat." So I said, "It's good to have a meal altogether." Sam said, "But sometimes I don't want to wait." I asked why and he replied, "Because I am hungry" (SM, Oct. 27).

The experiences of waiting to have his turn to speak and not being given the opportunity to do so accumulated. Sam began to stop raising his hand. He did not put up his hand as often as he had before.

Becoming Self-Responsible

Since Sam started to have new experiences in the school, he began to become more independent and grown-up, like the other two children in this study. As was stated earlier, Sam was raised in the extended family and spent most of his time with his grandparents who were permissive with their grandchildren. Thus, his mother tended to regard him as still young and dependent. Sam was still sleeping with his mother at night and could not get cleaned up by himself before kindergarten.

But when he was put in a different situation in his daily life, he began to try to do more things by himself, which was often encouraged by his mother.

> Sam seems to become more grown-up and independent. In the morning when I say to him when he is sleeping, "It is time to go to school." He immediately wakes up, brushes his teeth and washes his face all by himself. Usually I have to tell him to do this and that, but these days I do not have to do this. He just does by himself. He can clean up by himself in the washroom. In fact I encouraged him, "You have to learn this, because you are big now and at school nobody can do this for you." Later he tried to clean up by himself several times and now he is good enough to do it by himself.... He is sleeping by himself in his own room too. I feel he has grown-up a lot (SM, Sept. 27).

Whereas Jason was overprotected or indulgently taken care of by his mother and he cried when he was forced to be left alone without her, I never observed Sam showing any reluctance to be separated from his mother at the school. Rather, he became more self-responsible, maybe because he was asked to do so or just because he felt like being a 'big boy.'

> For the show and tell time, he took a big and heavy train to the school. I suggested to him that I would do that for him, but he said that he could do it by himself and he carried it to the school. It looked too big for him. But he would not allow me to carry it for him (SM, Sept. 25).

Sam's mother was satisfied with Sam's acting like a big boy. When she first started sending him to school, she felt Sam was still too young and did not really expect him to behave. She was not sure whether he could adjust well to the school or not, so she was afraid he might refuse to wake up at the right time in the morning, or he might not want to go

to the school because he felt so strange there. But now she is satisfied with Sam's growing independence and adjustment to the school, although sometimes she is still spoon feeding Sam at meal time.

Making a New Friend

By having Ricky in his new classroom, Sam could also enjoy a feeling of security within a strange environment. As was shown in Ricky's life world, Sam hugged Ricky on the first day in the classroom as if he had unexpectedly found a very close friend. In fact they had attended the same playschool for a year so they knew each other very well. If he was separated from Ricky, he would try to be closer so as to play with him. On September 10 when the children were in the gym running around and shouting, Sam suddenly seemed to realize that he was not with Ricky. He stopped running and looked around. He ran to Ricky and said, "Ricky, you are here." He continued running, trying to keep close to Ricky. On September 17, when Ricky was called by the teacher prior to Sam and left for the center, Sam constantly kept his eyes in the direction Ricky was going and then he also decided to go to the play dough table where Ricky was.

But, according to Sam's mother, Sam did not like Ricky much. Sam was often complaining about being teased or kicked by Ricky. Actually I observed several instances when Sam's play materials were taken away by Ricky. Sometimes he was made to feel foolish by Ricky in the classroom. But he did

not complain much about it and still played with Ricky during the first month in the new environment. Maybe he was giving an important weight to Ricky not because he liked him personally, but because Ricky was the only child he could rely on for his emotional security within an unfamiliar culture.

But, as he became more used to the situation, he attempted to make another friend, which seemed to be a big adventure for him. He decided to get out of his old life circle and plunge into a new beginning. Consequently, Ricky began to be disregarded by Sam. Sam was giving his heed to another boy, Cliff. Whenever possible, Sam would follow Cliff and try to sit by or stay next to him.

> In the gym, Sam was following Cliff and saying to him in a low voice, "I will sit by you." Cliff tried to get away from Sam and moved his spot. But Sam followed him again and finally sat by Cliff. Later on when the teacher asked the children to line up, Sam was in a hurry to follow Cliff and stand right behind him again. When they came back to the classroom, Cliff sat on a small space between two children which could be only for one person. Sam seemed to be at a loss and wandered around before he finally occupied another spot (Sept. 24).

> At the recess, Mary and Susan were waiting for Ricky and Sam outside. Sam was coming out by himself and said to them, "I will go to my friend." He was running toward the park in the playground. Sam was still following Cliff, when I got there (Sept. 24).

Although Cliff was not willing to play with Sam at first, later on he became quite open and friendly with Sam. At recess they went out together holding hands and sometimes they would sit on the rug and talk to each other. Sam said that Cliff was his best friend. One day when we were drawing

about our friends, he drew Cliff and said, "You know what? Yesterday I was playing with Cliff at the recess time" (Oct. 3).

As the date approached to the middle of October, Cliff began to make another friend. Thus Sam was left alone. On October 16, at snack time, Sam pulled the chair beside Cliff. Danna came up and said, "Hey, this is my spot." Cliff agreed with her, "Yeah, I saved this chair for Danna." Sam sat on the next chair by Danna. Cliff and Danna were chatting to each other and did not pay attention to Sam. Sam just looked at them and sometimes smiled to himself.

> After drawing a picture to send to Bobby, a boy who was sick and could not come to the school for a long time, Sam walked to the assigning board and found Cliff there. He sat on the rug by Cliff who was reading a book with Danna. Sam asked Cliff, "Is this witch?" (pointing to the picture on the book) Cliff glanced at Sam and did not reply to the question. Sam sat beside them for a minute and then left (Oct 23).

Sam's interest in playing with Cliff was not accepted in a variety of contexts, as shown in the above illustrations. He was consistently seeking the opportunity to play with Cliff whenever he could find a chance. Often he had to experience frustration or isolation. Hence around the middle of November he went back to Ricky. Ricky was always open to Sam and they began to play with each other again. But Sam would still attempt to be friends with Cliff when he could. On December 3, Sam was building something by himself in the block corner. Cliff approached. Sam became very excited and said, "Hi, Cliff. Do you want play with me?"

Cliff just looked at the structure Sam was building and asked, "What are you making?" Sam replied, "A house." Cliff began to look around at the other centers (seemingly not interested in the blocks). Sam tried again, "You want play with this car?" (handing the green plastic car to Cliff) Cliff accepted Sam's offer, "O.K." But shortly after that, Cliff left for the house corner. After his own journey to make a new friend in school, Sam went back to his old friend. But he did not seem to give up completely his new adventure. Rather, he still tried to play with his new friend.

Feeling of Isolation and Powerlessness

During an interview with Sam's mother, the teacher commented on Sam's interpersonal relations. She said that he had good relationship with other children (SM, Nov. 15). But, actually he was not actively involved with classmates other than Ricky. Other children did not ask Sam to play with them, either. Sam played mostly by himself, even when he was sharing with other children at the same center such as the house corner, art area, or block corner.

Moreover, Sam was tolerating a lot in his relationship with other children in the classroom. Often he was ignored by others and play materials or work appliances such as blocks, cars, crayons, and books which he had been using were often taken away by the other children. At such times, however, he did not strongly express his feelings to them.

He usually responded, "No, it's mine." or "You have yours there." But when others persisted in taking these materials, he just withdrew from them and tried to find something else to play with. Of course, Sam did not always accept and tolerate whatever his classmates did to him, especially when his personal rights were intruded. On October 3, in the gym, Eric took Sam's ball away. Sam was chasing him and saying, "Hey, that's mine." Eric was bouncing the ball. Standing beside him without saying anything for a minute, Sam repeated again, "Hey, that's mine." Finally Eric threw the ball far away. Sam ran to catch the ball.

In the group play situation, Sam was usually isolated by other children. Even though he did not actively try to participate in the group, he did not complain about being rejected either. He seemed to accept and tolerate it.

> At the book corner, Sam and John started to make a parking lot at the same time. John reached for a block. Sam handed him some blocks from the shelf. Sam then put a small block between two big blocks which John had already built as part of a parking lot. John shouted, "Hey, not this way." John took the small block away. Sam watched John for a while. Later he took two cars from the block shelf and started to move the cars on the floor. He played by himself (Oct. 16).

> Sam was at the house corner with two children. He was taking some small dishes and cups out of the cupboard. I was standing by the house corner. Naomi looked at me and said, "You can come in, if you like." So I entered the house and sat on the small chair. Naomi explained to me, "Glenn is Dad and I am Mom and you are the guest." Sam was steadily looking at us. I asked, " What about Sam?" Naomi just glanced at Sam and replied, "Nothing." Sam moved to the toy phone because the cupboard was occupied by Naomi and Glenn (Oct. 24).

Halloween day was a most unhappy day for Sam, unlike most of the other children in his classroom. The teacher sent a letter to each child's home saying to prepare for the Halloween party and to bring a special costume to the classroom. The morning of the Halloween party each child put on their own special costume and started commenting to each other. Many mothers came to the party, too. Some mothers wore special costumes but others did not. They were chatting to one another and the whole classroom was elevated creating a different atmosphere.

I was standing and talking with Ricky's mother, facing the door. I saw that Sam was standing in the hall and looking in the window. I then realized that he did not have on a special costume. He did not come in the room; he just stayed out there. I walked over to him and suggested, "Sam, let's go into the classroom." He shook his head. I enticed him into the classroom and he walked to the puzzle table then stood by the dolly house. Nobody seemed to notice that Sam was there. The teacher and all the children were meeting on the rug like on a typical day. After a while the teacher saw Sam and asked, "Sam, would you like join us?" He did not move. The teacher came closer to Sam and said, "Sam, we can put some make-up on your face. And you can find some special costume in the house corner. Maybe you can help him" (looking at me). Sam refused, "No, I don't want it," and finally began to cry. This was the first and last observation of Sam crying and making trouble in the

classroom. The teacher said, "Well, when you are ready, come and join us." She went back to the rug. After the whole group meeting, the children were divided into small groups and each group took turns playing special games prepared for the Halloween day. There was lots of laughter and merry chatting. Sam persisted in his refusal to join other children for the games. After recess, he seemed to change his mind and joined the classroom activity. But he still looked very uncomfortable as he played among other children. He was frequently looking around at the other children and their mothers.

Later Sam's mother was talking about the happening at Halloween;

> I did not regard it as such an important thing. Sam did not ask me to prepare a special costume, either. I made a paper costume for him, but on the morning of the Halloween party, he refused to put that on. I thought it was optional to have a special costume that day, so I just sent him to the school without one (SM, Nov. 3).

Sam dramatically experienced the feeling of isolation from others at the Halloween party to which no meaningful significance could be given within his home culture. After this experience, he was hoping to be a witch 'like other children' next Halloween.

> He was drawing a picture of a witch. I said to him, "It looks like a witch." Sam said, "Yeah, it's me, I'm gonna be a witch next year like other children" (Nov. 3).

He did not want to be different from the other children and thus feel isolated from them next year.

Becoming Interested in Letters

Since Sam started kindergarten, he has been showing a noticable interest in writing and reading letters, something which he did not pay much attention before. When his sister, Mary, practiced words like 'Brown' or 'Bear,' he tried to copy them. Furthermore, instead of playing with toys, Sam began to spend much of his time at home trying to copy the words and letters which his sister would bring from school. According to Sam's mother,

> He often sits quietly and copies some of the letters in the book or the papers of his sister. He will show this to me very proudly, "Mommy, I did this by myself." I occasionally encouraged him to practice it with his sister, because I think he should begin to learn it from now on (SM, Oct. 13).

Sam's mother seemed to be pleased with Sam's interest in reading and writing. On October 13 when I was at Sam's house having a talk with his mother, Sam just played with his plastic cars. His mother said, "Take a paper and write the letters rather than playing with those things. Now you go to school and need to study." Sam went to his room and came back to the living room and started to copy some words. I asked Sam's mother, "Do you like to teach Sam reading and writing?" She replied, "I do not know, but he does not seem to dislike it, so I just get him to do it."

Sam also began to show his interest in reading and was more aware of the print in his various life spaces. Often he would read some of the signs on buildings as he rode in the car.

Getting Lost

Sam also experienced a feeling of confusion in terms of the time schedule of the class activities. He had no idea of what he was to do next and where he was to go. As described in Ricky's section, the children moved to the other places like the music room, library, or gym at least once a day. On Tuesday and Thrusday, they were busy moving around the school building doing the teacher's plan of activities. Like Ricky, Sam also had a conflicting idea about the time schedule. On Thursday, September 18, all the children were walking in line to the gym. Naomi, another child in Sam's class, asked me;

N: Are we going to the music room?
O: Don't you know where we are going now?
N: No.
O: How about Sam? Do you know where are we going now?
S: (shaking his head)
O: I think we are going to the gym now.
S: Not music room?
O: No. After gym, we will have music class (Sept. 18).

One day in September, Sam took his library books to school on Wednesday. I saw he was carrying a yellow plastic bag in the morning and asked him, "Sam, is this your day for show and tell?" He said, "No, it's my library book." I asked him, "Did you think that we were go to the library today?" He nodded his head and squeezed the bag into his cubby hole. Occasionally in the morning before the class started, he asked me, "Are we going to have center time today?" Like many other children, he seemed to be hoping that he could enjoy free play during the day, but he wasn't sure whether

he would be allowed to or not.

He also experienced frustration when he was really absorbed in doing something, because of the strictly followed time schedule. On October 9, when Sam was just starting another puzzle, the teacher turned off the lights and said, "I would like you clean up now." Sam muttered, "I'm gonna finish this quickly." He hurried to find the correct piece for each spot so he could finish that puzzle as soon as possible. It was not easy for him to finish it in a short time. Finally the teacher was saying, "Garry is ready, Ricky is ready, ... (Usually she continued to call other children's names who were already ready on the rug. Sam became impetuous. I told him, "I will clean this up for you if you want go now." He left in a hasty movement.

As was illustrated in the above description, especially when Sam was getting deeply involved in his own activity, he was forced by the teacher immediately to stop and was not allowed to continue. He had no idea when the teacher was going to turn off the lights or when he had to move to other activities. Hence, he often felt confused or bewildered. These experiences appeared to make Sam learn that when the teacher turned the lights off, he was to immediately stop whatever he was doing and move to the rug to get directions from the teacher, even though the exact time of when this would happen was not clear to him.

On December 4, Sam, Cathrine, and Miles were at the same table coloring a Christmas tree sheet. They were having

a little chat.

> Miles: When is recess?
> Cathrine: I don't know.
> Sam: You can just go out when the teacher says it's recess time.

Sam seemed to have learned that he did not have to care about when he could have recess, center time, or whatever. It was not within his power to decide the time for recess. By November, he did not show much conflict or worry any more about the time. He no longer asked what was about to happen; it was as if he had already learned that all he could do was to follow whatever the teacher said.

Experiencing Teacher

For Sam, who was from a typical Korean culture, the teacher was a person whom we had to respect, almost unconditionally, and had to listen to very carefully. Within the Korean culture, the teacher tends to be regarded as a wise and respectable person. Sam was a good follower of the teacher. I never observed Sam making trouble for the teacher or for other classmates.

Sam's mother was hoping that Sam would follow the teacher's instructions and teachings. Every morning when she took Sam to school she would say, "Listen well to the teacher and study hard." It was a typical request from my parents when I was attending school. On October 13, when I met Sam in church, he ran over to me and hugged me, which he had never done before. And then he quickly went back to his friend and said, "You know what? She is my teacher." The boy

looked at me as if he were suprised. Sam said to his friend, "I like her. She never gets mad at us." Thus Sam seemed to view me as a teacher. His mother said that Sam reported to her almost everyday whether I came to the school or not; he usually did this before she had time to ask him. In fact he did not talk much to me or show his interest in me in the classroom, unlike Ricky. Nevertheless he had his own idea of me in his mind and also he was concerned about my existence in the classroom.

However, the real image of a teacher in Sam's mind seemed to be different from that expressed by his usual actions in front of his teacher or his parents. One day I was at his house reading a book which he borrowed from the library about a ghost. When I was finished I said, "I think your teacher read about the ghosts many times before Halloween." He agreed with me. Our conversation went on;

> O: You must like your teacher who reads many funny stories to you.
> S: Sometimes she is so mad to us. She punishes some children.
> O: But, not you.
> S: She scares us. But you don't (Oct. 23).

He was making a point about his teacher. I never observed the teacher being mad at Sam or punishing him, but he was experiencing the teacher in a whole context with other children. He was putting himself in others' shoes. Thus he felt scared when the teacher was mad at some other children.

Sam also thought that the teacher was a nice person who taught the children. Sometimes he liked her when she allowed him to have free play time. On November 24, I was at the

church talking with my daughter about her daycare teacher. Sam came up and asked, "Does she go to school too?" I said, "Yeah, she goes to the daycare." Our conversation continued;

S: (smiling and looking at my daughter)
O: She likes her teacher.
S: Sometimes I like my teacher too. She is nice.
O: When do you like her best?
S: Ummmm... When she says it's center time and recess.
O: How about other times?
S: No-o-o-o. I don't like her.
O: But, I think she always tries to help all the children in the school.
S: Yeah, I know.
O: Did you know that?
S: She is doing a good job. She teaches us.

Making Something *Good*

After living in the classroom society for two months, Sam began to show concern about some of the criteria to be evaluated as 'good.' During the first two months, this was not really on his mind. In November Sam started to evaluate himself or his works. Usually the standard was an external one such as other friend's work or the teacher expectation.

On November 6, all the children were sitting on the rug for the recess. Terry showed his picture to the teacher, which was about a bike. The teacher praised him, "Terry, that's a nice picture. All kinds of details are here, very good. I'm gonna display this on the board." She attached the picture on the board right beside the teacher's chair. Sam was looking at the teacher and Terry, with an envious face. Terry was a child who had been highly praised for his drawings by the teacher. Actually, one of his pictures was

printed on the front page of the first news letter from the kindergarten.

Later on November 15, Sam was at home drawing a fish. I commented,

O: Good, Sam. I like your fish. What kind of fish is that?
S: No, I am not good.
O: Why? I like your green fish. He looks so happy.
S: You know Terry? He draws really good pictures.
O: Well, I think Terry is good in drawing, but your fish is really good too.
S: (just smiling)

Sam was experiencing evaluating himself indirectly, in comparison with other children. Other children's work became the standard of evaluating his own work. The teacher was the main mediator to stimulate Sam's experience of being compared with other children and finding a new criteria to evaluate about himself.

Another criteria which Sam began to learn in appreciating his own work was what the teacher taught him. On November 25, Sam and I had a conversation;

O: I saw you were painting a big fish in the other room for long time. Why does it take so long like that?
S: Because, you need to make a good fish.
O: What is good fish?
S: If it has many little things there.
O: Is that right? I did not know that.
S: Teacher said that.

Around at the beginning of November the teacher set up an unusual project to paint a big fish for every child in connection with the theme of 'pets.' They were told to move to the other work room to paint the fish and often were interrupted during their own free play. At first the

children did not know the nature of the project. When the teacher asked the children to paint the same fish several times, they seemed to feel confused as to why they had to do it several times; it was not the usual pattern of their works. When the teacher was calling several children's names to go to the work room to paint their own fish again, most of the children said, "I did it already." The teacher said, "No, we are not finished yet. You are going to paint a little bit more details on fish so that we can make a better fish." This experience led Sam to learn what should be the criteria for evaluating his own work. The teacher's standards such as having more details became the criteria to see his own work.

VI. Meaning of Beginning Schooling for Children: Underlying Themes and their Meanings for Educators

A. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the life-world of each child was depicted in an attempt to understand the lived meaning of beginning schooling. In this chapter, I present five pervasive themes based on the experiences of three children and on my own reflections.

First of all, it might be necessary to clarify what the word, 'theme' signifies in this study. If thematizing is not understood in a full sense, the interpretative efforts may be misled. In this study, the act of thematizing is basically an attempt to make sense of the child's world and is an abstracted form of theorizing. Etymologically, *theoria* "'connotes wakefulness of mind' in the 'contemplation' or 'pure viewing of truth'" (Van Manen, 1982, p. 44). Thus theorizing was originally intended to awaken our mind in orienting toward the truth instead of providing a fixed form of knowledge. In this sense, it had an edifying purpose as a conversational and hermeneutic activity.

> Theorizing as a conversational, hermeneutic activity is edifying in that it is constitutive of our spiritual and intellectual lives as pedagogues. It makes us more and more essentially what in essence we already are; teachers, parents, etc. (Van Manen, 1982, p. 44).

In my study, I propose the themes as 'places' or 'windows' through which we can look at the children's world as a whole and through which the real essence of their

school life reveals itself. In this sense, the value of theme can be understood in terms of its power to disclose the children's world. The development of these themes cannot be regarded as the end of our efforts to understand children's world, rather, it is a path to understand the children's lived world as a whole. The aim of themes can be understood as "illumination, possibly resonance, but not generalizability or 'truth'" (Cottrell, 1982, p. 209).

In theorizing or thematizing the life worlds of three children, my basic intent was to prepare a communicative base for those concerned about our children's future. The five themes which I present here are not correct answers, or 'truth' to the question of this study. Rather, they are intended to provide a reflective moment on our taken-for-granted act of educating children.

B. I Have Long Leg

Our whole life is a continuously changing and ever-growing process. Moreover, it seems natural for children to grow up; they seem to change everyday and we are often astonished by the enigmatic power of their growth. When children reach school age, how do they experience this process of growing-up? What is it like for children to have a growing-up process at the moment of going to school?

As was described in the previous chapter, three children in this study tended to feel grown up as they started going to school. Generally they became more

independent in their everyday lives and felt proud of this change, although each of them lived through this experience in a different way. Jason initially met his new school life with loneliness and anxiety when he was separated from his mother and initially he would cry when she left the classroom. He struggled against staying alone without his mother in the classroom. For Jason, whose mother stayed at home during most of his life and thus who tended to receive a great deal of her care and attention, the situation appeared to be more difficult than for the other children. However, Jason seemed to become more independent and feel bigger after going through his fears and loneliness of separating from his mother.

Ricky and Sam also became more independent and felt proud of it after they began going to school. Their reactions were somewhat different from Jason's and they did not seem to experience many difficulties as he did. In the preparation of sending their children to school, the parents emphasized and encouraged their children to become more grown-up and to do things by themselves. Ricky and Sam seemed to accept their parents' encouragement. For example, Sam began to sleep alone in his room and Ricky tried to do many things by himself such as taking books down from the bookself or voluntarily going to bed before his parents asked him to.

However, Jason and Ricky began to act in a contradictory manner; on the one hand they wanted to be

independent and were proud of it, and on the other hand they wanted to be more dependent and asked for more physical contact and emotional support from their parents. These actions seem to show us that they could not feel secure or comfortable in their historical moment of going to school, since children tend to seek emotional support from parents when they do not feel safe or comfortable. What does it mean for children to be grown-up, or to be independent?

When Jason and Ricky became more independent, but at the same time attempted to go back to their original state of younger children, they did not seem to really accept this independence as a part of their lives. If they had really wanted and accepted their new independence, they would not have regressed to dependency; when we truly want to adopt a new life style, we usually do not regress to our former patterns. At this point, it seems to be possible that they did not want to become independent but they were asked to become independent. If we look at Jason's experience, he had a very hard time accepting the reality of being separated from his mother. But going through this reality, he turned into a more self-supportive child. In this context, it seems that he 'needed' to change his life pattern into a more self-responsible and independent one, rather than wanting to make the change within his own intention and decision.

Hence, it seems that they were required to act independently and to do things by themselves when they became students, regardless of their desire to change. That

is, the task of being grown-up and independent was given to them by the external demands of going to school. Thus, they had to experience the feeling of insecurity and anxiety in order to meet the imposed task of achieving independence. Of course, we cannot deny the importance of independence in our lives. All of us, as parents and educators, might agree that our children need to grow up and achieve their independence as they become older. They cannot always remain dependent and under the protection of their parents. It seems not only practically impossible but also educationally undesirable for our children not to learn independence. They need to stand up by themselves in the world to realize their own existence as individual human beings. In a sense, they themselves want to get out of their immature vulnerability and make their own efforts to accelerate their growth. We, as adults, also need to encourage and help them to learn independence.

However, independence often seems to be required or even imposed on children at a certain age as an unavoidable developmental task, as the three children in this study had to become more independent when they reached school age. This requirement seems to be based on the belief that our children need to learn certain tasks at a specific age or developmental level in order to function appropriately in the society. We need to ask, "Is being independent good for children because we emphasize it, or do we emphasize it because it is good for children themselves? What is the

reason behind being independent?" At this point, Vandenberg (1971) seems to provide us a significant insight. He wrote:

> Neither the wanting-to-be-independently or wanting-to-be-someone himself should be considered as the verbal expression of a value or as an ideal that is consciously held by the child: they are *underlying structuations* of being-child (p. 66).

For children, growth and independence are not merely things which can be given from the outside. Rather they are existential tasks. To grow up is not just a value or an ideal which the children need to hold, because growth itself becomes children. Thus, growth, as an existential task, exists as a power to make our children become themselves instead of beings-for-others. The pursuit of growth on the part of the children is to search for their authentic selves, not only in the sense of what they are but also in the sense of what they want to be.

Buytendijk (1953), in depicting phases in the emergence of experienced freedom in the child, gave a particular significance to the phase of 'freedom of caprice and initiative.' During this period, the child explores his/her world, responding to the provocative nature that demands the thrust for freedom. At this time, the child's being is projected into the world, while simultaneously adapting to things as experienced. S/he is realizing him/herself in an authentic mode. By going through this authentic mode of being during the stage of experienced freedom, children finally come to the achievement of moral freedom. Buytendijk (1953) writes:

> The human being of the child is fulfilled only through his existence, his being *in* the world and *for* the world, through his physical being. In this existence, the consciousness of the child becomes at the same time consciousness of the world and consciousness of self, that is to say, consciousness of his initiative, of his autonomy and of his independence (p. 5).

For children, exploration of the world is the projection of themselves. There is no decisive boardline between themselves, their consciousness, and their actions.

Nevertheless, the authentic mode of our children tends to be disregarded and eroded in the institutionalized form of education. The children in this study were requested to grow up and become more independent by going to school. They were prohibited from their existential modes because of the demanding task of going to school and accordingly of becoming more grown-up. As the projection of themselves was not allowed, they began to feel anxiety and insecurity. To compensate, they tried to seek more care and attention from their parents. This feeling of insecurity implies that they were forced to reside in the false mode of living.

Bettelheim (1976) looked at the fundamental human inner feelings enshrined in fairy tales. He noted that many of stories dealt with the universal childhood fear of being separated from one's parents. He claimed:

> There is no greater threat in life than that we will be deserted, left all alone... and the younger we are, the more excruciating is our anxiety when we feel deserted, for the young child actually perishes when not adequately protected and taken care of (p. 15).

Vandenberg (1971) points out the significance of safety for

children's active exploration into the world through play, which is an existentially serious affair. He claims that "play is possible... only in a secure world where all possibilities of being are open." "A precarious, unstable, threatening, and hostile world does not invite exploration, nor does it encourage him to go to it, nor do things beg to be played with" (p. 63).

However, do we really give much attention to our children's feeling of insecurity in our ordinary realtionship with them? I am reminded of one event which I observed in a daycare setting. When the mother of a girl had left, she started to cry. The teacher kept on telling her that "there is no reason to cry" because her mother would come back and pick her up. But, for the little girl, the feeling of insecurity and loneliness at the moment was not a matter of reason, but a real projection of herself. Moreover, from whose perspective does reason exist? When this real feeling is neglected and ignored by adults, it can be a negation of the totality of the child.

Then, why were children denied from their authentic mode because of the given task? More specifically, why do the children need to act independently at a certain point of their lives? The external imposition of independence seems to be significantly related to the preoccupation of the value of the functional adaptation. Within this value, the children need to behave as appropriate members of the existing society and thus to be molded in a specific way.

The children are expected to learn a certain content of behavioral patterns to fit into the existing society. In this belief, the educator's role is "to regulate the way the world enters into the student, ...to fill the students by making deposits of information which he considers to constitute true knowledge" (Freire, 1970, pp. 62-63).

In the reality which Freire explains, the children's active involvement in their world tends to be overlooked and negated. They are just exposed to the particular set of knowledge, which is isolated from their real experience and closed from and to the full actualization of themselves. Suransky (1982) explicated the socialization function of equilibrium model in relating to Freud's psychodynamic perspectives. She wrote:

> The principle of homeostasis has emerged as an integral part of psychodynamics. Socialization theory has espoused the training of disruptive impulses, with disruption viewed from the perspective of the smooth-functioning social structure. An adjustment norm in therapy has oriented the individual to change in order to accommodate to the status quo of the structure (p. 183).

Within this functionary and unidimensional preoccupation, the child's lived meaning tends to be totally overlooked and eroded. The child tends to be reduced to merely an object for the social order and system maintenance. Eventually, the process of education becomes 'domestication,' rather than 'awakening' of our children's mind.

To become grown-up cannot be an objectively given task which our children are required to achieve because of

external demands. It rather can be seen as an existential task which can lead them to their authentic selves. To realize this task, they need to be free from artificial standards. But, contemporary education is preoccupied with the value of maintenance function of existing society and artificially determined standards to make the function go smoothly tend to be imposed on children. Although most children appear to accept this social function, as was seen by three children in this study, we need to reflect on the real meaning of independence. Vandenberg (1971) states, "the child has to be free to disobey in order to genuinely obey" (p. 71).

C. I Did Nothing

Schooling, in its most concrete sense, consists of various educational activities which are regarded as essential and important for children to know. In the classroom, as we have seen, the teacher provided a number of activities for children which usually were designated to keep them busy. No one would deny the necessity of these activities in a general sense, since without educational activities, education can hardly be possible. Thus, the teacher makes an effort to create and select diverse activities with the intent of providing children with valuable experiences. Parents also believe and expect that their children will have meaningful experiences in school. But, what is the meaning of school activities for children?

What is it to make school activities a valuable, educational experience?

It is in this context that the child's voice of "I did nothing" comes to us in a significant way. When Jason's mother asked him, "What did you do in school?" Jason replied, "I did not do anything." No doubt, this is a serious situation. He must have done something worthwhile when he was at school. But he said he had just spent two and half hours without doing anything. Behind the teacher's endeavours from planning to carrying out daily classroom activities, there is the belief that they will be meaningful and worthwhile for children. Nevertheless, if children like Jason do not experience them as something meaningful and worthwhile, what other reason can be given to classroom activities? When he said that he did 'nothing' in spite of the teacher's effort to teach something important, what did 'something' mean for him? In our effort to understand children's meaning of school activities, it seems to be necessary to look at the actual classroom culture.

As was described before, the teacher set up two or three main activities that were linked to a theme for a certain week (for example, making a turkey, coloring a safety booklet, and drawing a Christmas tree). Children were required to finish these tasks within a given period of time. At this time, the materials and resources for the activity were given to each child and usually the activity was directed by the teacher. Those children who stayed close

to the teacher tended to be in a more strict position of having to follow an exact procedure for the task. Even the content of the work tended to be ready-made and provided by the teacher, for example, telling the children to use brown to color the bear or providing them with a sample picture.

Within this classroom culture, the work mainly consisted of uniformized and standardized tasks. Most aspects of classroom activities, such as materials, procedure, and form, tended to be determined by the teacher. King (1984) made a succinct point about the work-embedded context in school when she wrote that "children use materials which teachers select, in the ways which teachers direct, to the ends which teachers designate" (p. 9). In this situation, there tended to be little space for the children's voluntary and self-directed participation in accomplishing their own work. The work designated by the teacher seemed to have little relevance to children's own needs and interests beyond its immediate task orientation.

Jason's expressions that "I did not do anything (in school)," and that "nothing funny at all," seem to symbolize this alienated character of school activities from children's meaning and interests. For example, when Jason said, "I will take these (two cereals) out when I get home," after being told to attach two pieces of cereal for bear's eyes, he seemed to mean that the way he was told to make his bear was not his intention. To attach two cereals as eyes on his bear was merely an imposed, external demand. In this

situation, it was not likely that Jason would do something in his 'own way' as there tended to be external requirements.

Except for playing at centers, Ricky also felt many things (such as drawing pictures) were boring and not much fun in school. He enjoyed drawing and coloring things at home, but he did not like doing these activities at school. He often became inattentive and felt tired in school, especially during the whole group sessions on the rug. Sam also began to learn a new evaluative standard of the work in living with those uniformized tasks. He began to learn what is 'good' for the teacher. For example, he discovered that if he drew more little details on fish, it was a good work because the teacher said so. This implies that the criterion of more detail on fish was not his own, as he did not find it through his own active inquiry. Thus Sam was taught that he should pursue his own work in accordance with the externally given and fixed standards.

Of course, we cannot deny the positive aspects of the pre-planning of classroom activities, without which the teaching can be chaotic and thus lead nowhere. In this sense, the pre-planning and the objectives for classroom activities are not only inevitable but can also be helpful guidelines for improving the quality of educational practice. However, in what form are these teaching purposes actualized in the classroom? What is their underlying rationality? Where would such rationality lead our children?

As was seen earlier, the form of classroom activities tended to be an imposition on the children. The children were required to pursue the work in accordance with external purposes and procedures which were, in essence, alienated from student's own needs and meanings. Dewey (1915) pointed out the problem of 'unidimensionality' embedded in the externally fixed and objectified classroom works as follows:

> There is not freedom allowed the child to create. He is free to choose which apparatus he will use, but never to choose his own needs, never to bend a material to his own plans. For the material is limited to a fixed number of things which must be handled in a certain way (p. 157).

Without freedom to realize their own possibility and to create their own world, the children were taught to put other's standards in place of their own. There was only one objectified and imposed way of projecting themselves into the world of their work. Henry (1963) presented one of the inevitable learning tasks to survive in school: "He must learn that the proper way to sing is tunelessly and not the way he hears the music; that the proper way to paint is the way the teacher says, not the way he sees it" (p. 291).

One of the pervasive assumptions implied in this imposition of the standardized and unidimensional mode of work on children may be that children do not know anything and thus they should be provided with an exact recipe to pursue their work, as signified by the idea of "depositories" (Freire, 1970) or "untamed beast" (Pinar, 1975). Within this belief, children tend to be reduced to empty vessels which need to be filled with predetermined

contents. Contents tend to be those things which are "detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them and could give them significance" (Freire, 1970, p. 57). Thus, on the children's side, the contents of schooling would be 'nothing,' as Jason expressed. For Jason, the school activities which were not connected to his own meaning and interest, were not 'something,' because they did not have any significance for him.

Here, another significant point concerning Jason's expression of 'doing nothing' can be seen. Jason's confession that he did nothing in school implies that he already had his own idea of what would not be 'nothing.' This means that he had his own framework of making sense in the world. We are often surprised at the creative mode of children's actions; they cannot be likened to blank sheets, Lockean *tabula rasa*, who are waiting to be filled from outside. They are creative and inventive human beings who eagerly endeavour to be themselves and to actualize their possibilities.

Nevertheless, when the creative and exploratory dimension of children did not become fully realized within the world of the standardized and objectified school activities, what could be the possible danger? If children's voluntary and self-directed participation in performing their works is not allowed, what could happen to our children? Freire (1970) gives us a significant insight when he says,

> Apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, men can not be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men pursues in the world, with the world, and with each other (p. 58).

As Freire pointed out, children can not be truly human beings without having their own space to invent and re-invent knowledge in the world. When the opportunities for children to do 'something' for themselves are restricted, they might feel worthless and empty. Frankel (1959) spoke of this emotion as "existential vacuum."

Greene (1973) also claims that "an individual has to be brought to *care* about proceeding reflectively and purposefully if he is to achieve the widening of vision made possible through mastery of a discipline" (p. 173). If the achievement of knowledge is not to be aimless and the knowledge gained is not to be inert, the knowledge should be melted into the individual along with his/her own reflective and participatory action. Greene also says that when we lose the freedom to initiate our endeavour, we come to have "feelings of hollowness, doubts about decency and worth" (p. 61), eventually we come to feel meaninglessness and nothingness. In this context we need to ask ourselves, "When the children are put in the classroom where the standardized and uniformized form of activity is prevailing, where are they destined to go?"

D. Where Are We Going?

Three children's lives in beginning their schooling were often revealed by the question, "Where are we going?" in a symbolic manifestation.

Ricky asked the question when he was walking along with other children through the hall to the music room. He was not sure where he was going at the moment. Jason often had difficulty in differentiating home time and recess time, when he was told to take his inside shoes off and put on his jacket. Sam was also going through his own conflicts in following the planned schedule of the classroom activities. Sometimes he did not know where he was going when he was moving in the line, although he did not even question his uncertain direction. Moreover, all of the children were also required to stop what they had been doing immediately when the teacher turned off the lights. Then they were directed to move into another section of classroom activities. And when the teacher called their names to assign them to work either before they had center time or when they were deeply involved in playing at the center, they also had to stop their play. At all these moments, they often showed reluctance and felt disappointment and frustration.

When the children experienced these moments, what was emerging in their mind? In our attempts to understand children's experiences of the teacher's planned time schedule, it might be helpful to remind ourselves of the concrete classroom contexts in which they lived as described

above. In both schools, each day was divided into several different sections of activities; calendar, center, gym, music, recess, snack, story, and so forth. For each section of the day, a certain amount of time was allocated and the teachers directed the classroom activities based on the assigned amount of time. The general classroom atmosphere tended to be very strict in terms of execution of the pre-planned time schedule as we can see from the following observations:

> One child asked the teacher, "Teacher, can I go to the block corner?" The teacher looked at the clock on the wall and said, "No, you can't, because we have only two minutes before clean-up." Later the child was wandering around the classroom until the time for clean up (Geoffery School).

> The teacher was reading the story to the children on the rug. Many children seemed to become quite interested in the story. They asked lots of questions and giving their own comments from their personal experiences. As the children became more active in talking about the story, the teacher repressed, "O.K., that's enough. We won't be able to finish this story today." The children seemed to become disappointed. The teacher just went on reading the next part of the story (Moonlight School).

At this point, we need to remind ourselves of the practical benefit of the teacher's pre-planned time schedule. When the teacher does not have a general plan about how to lead the classroom activities, there might be a sense of vagueness and ambiguity in the teaching. However, what we need to be reflective on here is the way the plan is dealt within the actual classroom. As we have seen, the flow of classroom activities tended to be based on the teacher's planned time schedule.

For example, when it was time to change from the center activity into another one according to the planned schedule, the teacher just turned off the lights and said, "I would like you clean up now and meet on the rug." She did not seem to be aware of what the children had been doing or of their needs and interests at that moment. As Jackson (1968) points out, "things often happen not because students want them to, but because it is time for them to occur" (p. 13). The teacher tried to keep a time schedule. Thus, "a major part of the teacher's role is to serve as traffic manager and time keeper, either deciding on a schedule himself (herself) or making sure that a schedule others have made is adhered to" (Silberman, 1970, p. 123). Even for guiding each individual child, the teacher depended on the planned schedule, since each child's name was called and they were asked to move into another activity which was usually a required task, at a certain time which matched a predetermined plan and purpose. Within this context, children's own needs and interests tended to be negated and they were led to feel frustrated.

We need to question is how the children are experiencing the meaning of time in living within the above classroom culture. Suransky (1982) seems to provide us a very significant point related to this question.

> We, through our intentionality, constitute time; time arises out of our relation with things, and it is we who constitute that relationship. Authentic time is not a continuum, a progressive seriation; and we can not talk of time apart from our consciousness. We are being-in-time. Time has no

> objectivity apart from the body-as-being-in-the-world (p. 66).

She makes the point that we, in our primordial form, create our own time with our consciousness as beings-in-the-world. Time is not an objectified linear continuation apart from our own consciousness. In Heidegger's expression, "Time cannot be found anywhere in the watch that indicates time" (1962, p. 11). Time is integrally linked to our being in the world as a network of intentionalities. Moreover our primordial experience of time in an authentic mode as above takes place during young childhood, since they do not become yet aware of the exigencies of clock time in which we as adults tend to reside. They have not yet created the mode of objectified and unauthentic time. Lippitz (1983) noted that children think in and with time long before they think about it.

Nevertheless, by being forced to stop their play and live according to the teacher's plan, the children experienced time not as a spontaneous part of their lives, but rather as an external force. Most of their activities and play were subordinated to the rigid adherence to a time schedule. Thus the children could not live by their own networks of intentionality; they were not subjects of their own time, but rather they became objects of it. They were actively socialized into the objectified time structure of the school. According to Suransky (1982),

> The creation of "time-consciousness" and, therefore, "time-objectifying" structures which mirror the cultural configurations of alienated time in the

> macrosocial system erodes the experience of lived time in young children; for they are socialized into institutional time, where time is no longer a field of presence, an abode, but an austere system of constraints demanding submission (p. 175).

We noticed that the temporal mapping of the day in both schools defined particular selected activities to be performed within certain time limits associated with clock time. Consequently there tended to be not only little opportunity for the children to live in their own lived time, but also remarkable enforcement of the objectified time. Eventually children might lose sight of the true mode of themselves, as can be disclosed by the theme of 'loss of self.' There were not children, but rather puppets who were manipulated by an external rule.

During the beginning stage of their schooling, however, children were questioning their places in this new culture. They were making their own efforts to find their present place and confirm themselves by asking questions or by showing confusion and frustration. In a sense, they were attempting to actualize themselves through revealing their own conflicts. As these experiences accumulated, however, the children did not even question their real place, as Sam said around Christmas, "You can just go out when the teacher says it's recess time."

Sam seemed to have learned the pre-determined nature of the time schedule in school. There was no need for him to question when he was going to have recess, because he learned that it was not within his reach. The only choice

offered to him was just to have recess whenever the teacher allowed him to do so. That is, he seemed to have learned that there was no space for him to decide when and what he was going to do. Eventually, he became a regular member of the school community by giving up himself and by accepting the given reality of that community without questioning it and by adjusting to it in a 'proper way.'

Greene (1973) spoke of the teacher's reality of approaching a new community as a stranger. She claimed that "if the teacher agrees to submerge himself into the system, if he consents to being defined by others' view of what he is supposed to be, he gives up his freedom 'to see, to understand, and to signify for himself'" (p. 270). If we relate Greene's (1973) claim to children's experience, Sam gave up his freedom to see for himself by submerging himself into the school system, as he decided not to question the pre-determined nature of the time schedule any more.

For children, however, it might be that there were no other choices provided for them except giving up their freedom and to consent to being defined by the school system. In other words, they did not give up their freedom by themselves, but rather they were forced to give it up. Hence, in a sense, for children to become an appropriate member of the school community implies that they must lose themselves and conform to the already given form of life in that community. So it is possible that, eventually, they might never be themselves because of the continuous and

negative conformity to external forces. When they begin their schooling, do young children step onto the road to self-alienation; a path which tends to be regarded by many people as one of the most prevailing and tragical diseases of modern man. Morgenson (1976) observed that,

> Man is alienated from reality and estranged from himself, partly because he has allowed his identity to be deeply submerged in the anonymous faceless mob. Man is a stranger in the world, the terrain is suddenly unfamiliar and more importantly he has become a stranger to himself. After his brief walk across eternity, he may look back and say sorrowly, "... but, none of that was me" (p. 188).

As Morgenson described, the children might confess after their long journey in schooling that "None of that was me."

The 'loss of self' or 'self-estrangement' also seems to be connected to another aspect of children's lives; being required to accept the teacher's standard to become 'good' students. In both schools, quietness was remarkably emphasized by the teacher. Most of the teacher's disciplinary actions in the classroom happened when the required degree of quietness was not met. Usually when the teacher explained some work or directed a whole group lessons such as reading story, working on calendar, or teaching games, some children became inattentive and began to talk to each other. Or sometimes they got involved in talking about personal experiences related to the subject which the teacher was dealing with at the moment. Whatever the situation, the children who made an unacceptable amount of noise were verbally criticized or directly punished by the teacher by having to stand by the door, move to another

spot, or sit by the teacher. This latter form of punishment seems paradoxical in a sense as it suggests that to physically be close to the teacher means containment rather than comfort.

Moreover, the teacher often used the children's strong desire for center time to make them quiet, since she often warned "If you are not quiet, you won't be able to have center time today." So there was no choice for children except to be quiet if they were to have an opportunity to realize their needs. As Ricky said, "If you are quiet, you can be a leader," his strong desire to be a leader was also used by the teacher as an effective mean to control him. Jason also knew what the teacher expected when he said to a boy who tried to talk to him, "Don't talk to me, she won't call me." When the teacher took the children through the hall to the gym or music room, or when there was any special events such as field trips or having visitors, the most important request by the teacher was to maintain silence. She often reminded the children of the importance of being quiet by asking a question such as "What do we need to do?" The children would shout in a chorus, "We have to be quiet.". When I asked them why they had to be quiet, they said, "I don't know" (Jason) or "Teacher said that" (Sam).

Hence, to be quiet was considered a learning task for the children. And if they achieved the task, they were labelled 'good' students. There was little opportunity for children to discover the real purpose and meaning of

'quietness' in group life or to find the true place of being 'good' in their daily lives. The standard of being 'good' was imposed by others and the children could not reject the teacher's view of 'being good' without being blamed or punished. Laing's (1969) description of being 'good' is closely related to the children's situation. He wrote:

> Being 'good' never doing anything other than what one is told, never being a 'trouble,' ... Being good is not, however, done out of any positive desire on the individual's own part to do the things that are said by others to be good, but is a negative conformity to a standard that is the other's standard and not one's own, and is prompted by the dread of what might happen if one were to be oneself in actuality (p. 98).

According to his claim, the true potential of an individual is destroyed in the effort to become 'good.' And then a 'false self system' which "consists in becoming what the other person wants or expects one to become while only being one's self in imagination or in games in front of mirror" (Laing, 1969, p 18), is created.

Another significant aspect related to the imposed silence was that the quietness was often enforced by comparing one child to another, thus enhancing a feeling of competition. The teachers would often say, "I am looking for a quiet hand," "I like the way Jane is sitting." Or "Mark is ready, Kane is ready." Thus the children were urged to model those children whom the teacher would judge to be 'good.' In other words, they were pushed to be like someone else, not like themselves. "To get them to desire to be like someone else, children must learn to be dissatisfied with

themselves" (Pinar, 1975, p. 363). Eventually they are led to the denial of themselves and become 'lost to others.' In schools, they are just playing at being some 'things' other than themselves; they do not exist as themselves. Within this reality, how can they pursue the actualization of their true mode of being?

When the children ask the question, "Where are we going?" they are attempting to find the real place of themselves and to confirm it. When the children are at the beginning stage of learning the external criteria of being good or making something good, they might be still wandering around their own modes of living. But, later they would not even question about it any more and fall into the forgetfulness of their own modes.

E. Can You Hold My Hand?

We, as human beings, cannot live alone but live together and thus we gravitate to others. We relate to others and seem to require "significance, that is, place in another person's world" (Laing, 1971, p. 136). Schachter (1959) maintains that this need might be a particularly powerful one in our lives. He noted that,

> People, in and of themselves, represent goals for one another; that is, people do have needs which can be satisfied *only* with interpersonal relations. Approval, support, friendship, prestige, and the like have been offered as examples of such needs. There is no doubt that such needs are particularly powerful ones and that associated with other people is a necessity for us (p. 8).

Children's needs for affiliation tend to be particularly strong and thus the consequences are more deleterious if they go unmet (Sullivan, 1953). They need to collaborate with others and to be involved in a way that "permits validation of all components of personal growth" (Sullivan, in Pinar, 1975, p. 369). Children need to develop a positive self-image. The nature of their affiliation with others influences the formation of children's images. As Musetto (1982) commented, "for a person to be important to himself or herself it is necessary to be found important to someone else" (p. 61).

In what ways are children's strong affiliative needs actualized in the school? As soon as Jason started his schooling, he actively approached a girl and attempted to establish a personal relationship with her. He tried to sit by her and hold her hand when they were in line. There was also another boy who came to be a close friend with them. The three of them seemed to get along intimately and they liked to play together. But, when told to "get one partner and stand in the line" to go to gym, library, or to go outside for recess, Jason was put in a situation where he had to be isolated from his best friends and thus became very disappointed. In other words, by virtue of the ritual of getting 'one partner,' Jason's affiliative need was seriously frustrated.

In the case of Ricky and Sam, they usually played by themselves and tended to be isolated from other children,

although they eagerly wanted to be accepted by their peers. Each of them made his own attempt to pursue his need to be affiliated with other children; Ricky often took a popular toy in order to play with some children and Sam persistently followed a boy whom he wanted to be with. In spite of these efforts, they usually remained isolated from other children. Nevertheless, nobody seemed to notice or be concerned about their feeling of isolation in the classroom, although Sam's teacher commented to his mother that Sam had a good relationship with other children.

At this point, we need to examine the hidden context of the ritual of getting a partner, lining-up, and the emphasis on quietness in the classroom in relation to children's experience of isolation. In both classrooms, whenever the children had to move into another place, they were directed to make one or two lines and to "zip" their mouths, or cover it up with their hand. Thus quietness was one of the essential requirements when they had to move out of the classroom. Usually the teacher stood in the very front of the lines and supervised them to make sure that they did not talk to each other or get out of the line. In this situation, each child had to 'walk in line' and to 'look straight ahead.' The underlying attitude of making children get 'one partner' and/or line up seemed to restrict their interactions, particularly their verbal communication, and keep the children under a teacher's supervision. Because of this efficient control, the children's active involvement

with each other could hardly be realized in school.

Moreover, the remarkable emphasis on quietness was powerful and prevented the children's verbal interaction both in and out of the classroom. Center time and recess were the most probable times for them to talk each other. But even at the centers, the acceptable level of noise was usually controlled by the teacher and the children were often warned to lower their voices. Most of the time they were prohibited to talk to each other. Thus, "silence is demanded, despite the fact that school children work in very close quarters" (Silberman, 1970, p. 130). In this demanding situation, the children "must try to behave as if they were in solitude, when in point of fact they are not...They must learn how to be alone in a crowd" (Jackson, 1968, p. 16). So there was little consideration given to their need to be affiliated with each other and so educational efforts were made to encourage their involvement with each other. The interactions between the teacher and the child tended to be very formalized and impersonal; it was very rare to observe private and personal communication between them. Thus the dominant culture involved fostering a dependency relationship with the teacher (Pinar, 1975). The children's basic need for affiliation could not be realized with this exclusive dependence on the teacher.

As Sullivan (1953) insisted, the importance of collaboration with others cannot be overlooked or denied as it is essential for the children's growth. As was observed,

the child's need for affiliation with others tended to be systematically disregarded and oppressed under the social control system in school. If Jason had not been forced to get only 'one partner,' he would not have been isolated from his group. If Ricky and Sam had been in a classroom where interaction among children was encouraged, it is possible that they would not have felt so isolated.

Moreover, the teachers often used methods of maintaining silence which stimulated competition among children for getting teacher's attention and praise, as each teacher often said, "I am looking for a quiet hand," or "I like the way Jane is sitting." As the children became quiet, they would look around at one another which seemed to imply that they compared themselves with others. At this moment, other peers become competitors for each child. Based on such competitive relationships, can the child develop a caring attitude toward others or sense of mutual trust? Mead (1970) points out that "without the experience of trust, the child will never become a trusting member of a society, who is able to love and care for others" (p. 85). We say our children trust and love one another, but in reality we teach them neither to trust nor to love others. Rather than trust and love, these teachers tended to stimulate mistrust and dislike among the children. In such a school context, the damage done to children's affiliative needs can be enormous.

There was also another dimension of this damage for culturally minority children. At the Halloween party, which

was not really connected to his cultural background, Sam experienced a feeling of isolation from other children. He came to school without a special costume because neither he nor his mother gave much significance to it. But when he found that every child had on a special costume and that the classroom atmosphere was unlike usual days, he refused to join the classroom activities. The teacher suggested he borrow a costume from the house center. The teacher aide tried to persuade him to put make-up on his face, but he strongly refused and finally started to cry. For Sam, it was not just the matter of external appearance. The concern was related to his total existence in the classroom; he felt not really belong there.

We need to examine the cultural aspects of Korean children living in a Canadian culture in order to better understand Sam's experience at the Halloween party. As Sam's mother said, "I did not regard it as such an important thing," the meaning of the Halloween was not part of her own culture. Sam also did not really ask his mother to prepare a special costume for him. Sam's mother had been living in a Canadian culture for eight years and Sam was born and raised here. Of course, they had seen and heard about Halloween. Nevertheless, there was not a strong connection between Halloween and themselves. In a sense, they had been physically in Canada, but there was not a true sense of 'belongingness' or 'homeness.'

In what ways did the classroom culture take into account these cultural differences? As was shown before, most of the classroom activities were related to the theme of the week. And the theme tended to be based on the socio-cultural events of the dominant group; thus topics such as Thanksgiving, Halloween, and Christmas were taken-for-granted themes. The children were reminded of these specific cultural events as part of the calendar activity, although some other themes such as safety, hospital, fire station, or bears were introduced to the children. Thus the general classroom atmosphere seemed to be dominated by specific cultural themes. Of course, these topics could be used to develop meaningful activities for children whose families were part of the Canadian culture. But for those children who were from different cultures, these activities could be confusing and lack meaningful structures. Moreover, I never observed any activities related to the cultural background of the children from other ethnic groups. Hence, in a sense, there was a total negation of the roots of particular children.

The issue of living in multicultural society has recently received considerable attention in Canada. Aoki, et al (1984) clarifies the underlying rationale of multiculturalism in Canada as follows;

> Underlying multiculturalism is a pluralistic notion of equality. In pluralistic society, groups have the right to develop their own identities, life styles and languages, as well as to preserve their own cultural heritage, on a basis of equality with the British-French tradition; no one group had cultural

> superiority; each ethnic experience is recognized as being equally Canadian, and, therefore, a valuable and integral part of the total Canadian experience rather than recognized as a "problem to overcome" (P. 269).

As they said, the spirit of multiculturalism suggests that no one group can dominate other minor groups; there is no cultural superiority and each ethnic experience is respected as an unique and valuable part of life. But, how is this spirit practiced in the actual classroom situation, specifically in two kindergarten classrooms in this study? Are all ethnic groups really treated as equals in terms of cultural identity? Are the cultural beliefs of all children really respected?

Sam's experience at the Halloween party can be regarded as a dramatic revelation of the sense of being dominated by a majority culture. This domination had been intensified through his daily experience of 'not-belongingness' in his classroom. It seems possible that 'cultural imperialism' does exist even in these small kindergarten classrooms.

F. She Is Nice

Although teaching tends to be regarded as one of the ordinary jobs, there seems to be an "attending to value" (Cottrell, 1982, p. 218). Jackson (1972) claims that education should be concerned with values; "Teaching, characteristically, is a moral enterprise. The teacher whether he admits it or not, is out to make the world a better place and its inhabitants better people" (p. 310).

We also often hear our children say their teachers are nice. They seem to know that the place of the teacher in educational setting is to help and guide them. Jason, Ricky, and Sam said that the teacher was nice. But, what did they mean by the word nice? Their idea of 'being nice' did not seem to come from a personal and private relationship with a specific teacher. When Jason said that his teacher was nice because she was 'just a teacher,' he seemed to imply that every teacher must be a nice person. At this time, 'every teacher' means the general image of the teacher, not a concrete and personal image of the teacher in his own world. When Ricky said that she was nice because she was doing a nice job, he may have meant that she was nice because she was behaving as a teacher who was supposed to behave. Sam thought that what his teacher usually did for children was teaching and this was a nice thing to do. While Jason said that he did not like his teacher, Ricky and Sam never said they did like their teachers. So it seems that Jason, Ricky, and Sam did not mean that they personally liked their teacher when they said that their teacher was nice. They seemed to accept the general image of the teacher as an objectified and given knowledge regardless of their actual experiences with her. Then, how was each child's concrete and personal experience with his teacher?

For Jason, the teacher was not a comfortable and warm person to approach as she had the power to control every his behavior in the classroom. Ricky tended to perceive his

teacher objectively in relation with her official role in the classroom. He used to describe his teacher as a person who taught the children some games and gave some work. When he changed his voice into a dignified tone when acting like the teacher, his behavior reflected his view of a teacher. His voice took on a tone of special authority. In the case of Sam, he seemed to feel detached about his teacher.

In general, there was no personal and deep interaction between the teachers in the two classrooms and these three boys. I never observed the teachers giving a hug to the children or having affective physical contact with them. Rather when the teacher attempted to physically get close to a child, often it was to correct a behavior. The main role of the teacher was to set up some activities and require the children to finish them. The expected role of the child was to complete the assigned works and follow the teacher's directions. The relationship between the teacher and the child tended to be dominated by the impersonalized contact between two objectified social roles and functions. The nature of impersonal relationship between the teacher and the child seems to be appropriately described by Bullough, et al. (1984).

> We are all aware of the hollowness and impersonal quality of the voices we encounter at the check stand or over the phone when we call about our bank balance. We expect a businesslike quality in these voices. It does not disturb us because we recognize that we have little if any personal connection to this other voice. The exchange that takes place is between roles, not between feeling and caring persons. When we break off, we receive a polite but habitual "thank you" or "have a nice day," and we go

> about activities as though the exchange had never taken place (p. 52).

Buber (1955) speaks of the nature of the relationship between teacher and child as being dialogical.

> The teacher must be really there, really facing the child, not merely there in spirit... in order to be and to remain truly present to the child she must have gathered the child's presence into her own. Then there is reality between them, there is mutuality (p. 49).

However, a dialogical relationship did not exist between the teacher and the child in either classroom. In the society where objectified functions and roles are emphasized, no real presence of the teacher could be felt by the child. Rather the relationship was reduced into the reified form. In this mode of relationship, the language goes into mid-air and is not quite understood. The teacher and child remain aloof from each other and become mere spectators. When the teacher speaks authentically with the student, however, the whole world is created anew each moment; the horizons of both teacher and student are under constant co-creation. In Greene's (1971) terms, "setting aside questions of definition, then, setting aside his thoughts about the 'constitution of the true objects,' the teacher can conceive his personal perspective on his students to be part of his insertion into the world-as-an-individual" (p. 94). However, the children in these classooms were not allowed to encounter the teacher in the dialogical mode and thus they tended to have negative feeling about their teachers.

As one of the decisive influences on this belief, a general atmosphere of our society, particularly parents' direction can be pointed. As we have seen in the case of three children, the parents' main suggestion for their children while they were in school was that they follow their teacher's direction. Almost everyday, the parent asked them to obey the teacher's words. In our society, as Pinar (1975) pointed out, "many parents predispose their children to respect and like their teachers, by stressing the importance of education or the wisdom of teachers" (p. 365). The children were predisposed in this way regardless of their real perception or experiences.

For young children, this process of predisposition can be a transference of dependency on their parents to some form of dependency on the teacher (Pinar, 1975). When young children move from home to the classroom, they do not have their parents' support and protection in this new environment. For those children who are highly vulnerable and thus need to depend on the adult's guidance and help, it is inevitable that they will seek another adult on whom they can rely when they are deprived of their original source of support. As they entered the schooling situation, the teacher may be the only adult on whom they can depend for emotional security or protection. Thus, when the parents directed their children to follow their teacher, the youngsters had no other choices. Within these conditions, they were taught to think that the teacher was a nice

person.

Now, we can see that the children said the teacher was nice, not because she was good to them, but because she was a teacher. And also they did not personally like their teachers because of their school experiences. But they thought that the teacher was nice, rather they were forced to think in that way. They were supposed to accept the belief that the teacher was nice, but they could not really feel it. In this situation, the word 'nice,' is merely an 'empty verbalism.' There is no lived meaning in it. But they repeat the word, and as Creber (1965) warned "the children will be influenced by what-they-feel-they-ought-to-feel" (p. 79). Their words are separated from their real feeling. This implies that they speak of something which is not what they really mean. This situation raises an important question in terms of the fundamental ground of communication. If we assume that our expressed words are alienated from our real meaning, how can we expect any genuine communication to occur? There can be only verbal expression in which no genuine encountering can exist. When the children are put in such situations, the fundamental ground for human communication is threatened.

What would eventually happen to our children who were keeping two contradictory ideas about the same person? They said the teacher was nice, but they could not really feel it. Their mind was split into two opposing parts and their real feelings would not be approved by their parent. Finally

they would fall into the schizoid condition, as described by Laing (1969).

> ...schizoid refers to an individual the totality of whose experience is split in two main ways: in the first place, there is a rent in his relation with his world and, in the second, there is a disruption of his relation with himself. Such a person is not able to experience himself 'together with' others or 'at home in' the world. But, on the contrary, he experiences himself in despairing aloneness and isolation: moreover, he does not experience himself as a complete person but rather as 'split' in various ways, perhaps as a mind more or less tenuously linked to a body (p. 17).

As Laing noted, the children can be led to the despairing loneliness and the feeling of desertion with their real feelings repressed and denied. When they are not allowed to open their minds to their real feelings because of imposed, objectified, and isolated knowledge, children can become strangers to themselves and thus cannot experience feeling at home in the world.

As we reflected, the children's word 'nice,' when applied to their teachers, did not mean that they really liked her. It was no more than verbal expression without any lived meaning. They verbalized it only because they were taught to believe it. There was a discrepancy between what they were asked to feel and what they really felt. When this distorted way of experiencing the world is forced on our children, what can we hope from them in the future?

VII. Reflection: Toward an Education for Children

As a mother who had a traumatic experience of sending my daughter to a day care center and as a student who is interested in early childhood education, I have been pondering one question in my mind; what is it like for young children to go to school? When children arrive at five years of age, most of them are expected to have some form of 'schooling' in contemporary society. This sense of schooling is based on adult aspirations and not on the child's own intentions or expectations. Children have to leave their familiar home environment and need to adjust to a different culture, the classroom, where there are many restrictions and regulations to follow (Jackson, 1968).

Although there have been efforts to understand how children adjust to an unfamiliar classroom culture, the focus in these efforts has been given to the measurable and externally observable behaviors, which tends to aim to identify general tendency or to develop generalizable, law-like propositions to explain children's behaviors. In such efforts to understand children's experiences of schooling, the child's own rich and lived experiences tend to be overlooked or over-simplified. What is it really like for young children to live in the school? What meaning do they give to their experience? The present study was proposed to get close to the children's world of schooling as a whole.

In order to unfold the deep meaning structure of the children's schooling, I entered into the concrete life-worlds of three Korean Canadian children, Jason, Ricky, and Sam who entered kindergarten in September, 1985. During the period from August to December, 1985, I participated in three children's world by talking with their parents, seeing and feeling their real actions and feelings in the classroom, and having occasional conversations with them. In order to understand their experiences in a wider context, I tried to get assistance from other sources such as the pictures they drew, the teacher's comments, photographs, and so forth. In an effort to understand their own meaning of schooling, I tried to distance myself from my own and prevailing, taken-for-granted beliefs and assumptions about the children and the school life so as to become more open and sensitive to the children's world. I also tried to re-question my new understandings and to have some critical distanciated moment. By putting myself in the children's place and by reminding myself of the memory of my school days, I endeavored to get close to the world of their experiences.

In chapter four, I presented descriptive portrayals of the experiences of Ricky, Jason, and Sam during the first four months of their schooling. These descriptions were read and confirmed by the parent of each child as their own child's story. The three children in this study were young and thus a dialogue did not seem to be the most meaningful

way to confirm my observation with them. However, I tried to cross check my observations on each child's experience with photographs, drawings, and by talking with them throughout the whole process. They had a variety of experiences related to things such as confusion, frustration, and isolation in living with many new classmates; feeling of grown-up; the teacher; the classroom activities; the time schedule; and so forth. Becoming more familiar with the classroom, however, they began to accept many aspects of this new culture which had been strange to them, taken-for-granted without much confusion, frustration, and questioning. They seemed to become adjusted members of school community.

As I delved into the deep meanings of their life-worlds, I tried to let significant themes emerge from their experiences as they related to the educational concerns and means of improving our educational practices. The themes which I identified were; I have long leg (feeling of grown-up); I did nothing ('nothing' as it related to school activities); Where are we going? (loss of self in the time schedule and evaluative criteria); Can you hold my hand? (wanting to be affiliated with and noticed by other classmates); and She is nice (The teacher is nice). I tried to interpret and reflect upon those themes, focussing on what these themes mean for us as educators and on what insights can be obtained to improve our educational practice.

In this final chapter, as a closing moment of this study, I will reflect on the children's lived experiences of schooling in a wider context. Especially, I will try to examine the place of children in the contemporary educational system on the basis of what I experienced in this study. An attempt to search for a proper place of children in educational practice will also be made.

Before moving into this effort, let me begin with my self-reflection on the act of understanding. Through the whole process of this study, even at this closing moment, I am still striving to capture the children's world with my endless act of understanding. Since the act of understanding is central in this study, It might be useful to reflect on the nature of the act of understanding, based on my direct experiences in this study

A. Reflection on the Act of Understanding

In this study, I endeavored to understand the meaning of schooling for children themselves. What does it mean to understand something? More concretely, what does it mean for us to understand children's meaning of schooling? In the dominant positivistic framework, the act of understanding tends to be conceived in a derivative sense with causal relationships that are predictable and generalizable and which lead to law-like propositions. Within this concept of understanding, something is understood when the explanation is in terms of general laws. Therefore, once an

understanding is attained through this process, it tends to be regarded as the understanding of the phenomenon.

As I entered into the chilren's worlds, however, the act of understanding could hardly be formulated in that way. The children's whole world was unfolded in front of me as a very ambiguous and complex whole. There were infinite pathways leading into their world. Thus it did not seem proper to attempt to examine the child's world with separated law-like propositions and define it with general laws. Rather, I fell into an ongoing process to see their world as a whole with the whole of myself rather than focussing on any one piece of it. In this process of understanding we project ourselves as a whole rather than rely on the methodological precision or pre-planned frameworks. In this sense, the process of understanding cannot be regarded as an arbitrary invention but rather as an expression or affirmation of ourselves not only as what we are but as what we hope to be.

However, as I have reflected earlier, the children's world was complex and ambiguous. It did not emerge in an immediately intelligible form, but rather, it disclosed itself as an infinite whole with many manifestations and possibilities. Thus, the understanding of this would call for my act of interpretation. As I began to make sense of the children's whole world with my horizon, I noted that each moment in my interpretation could not be understood in an isolated or fixed form. As soon as I was making a sense

of the children's world, I was already getting into another sphere of meaning and at the same time out of my preunderstanding. This sphere of new meaning also accelerated into another sphere of meaning. Thus, through this ongoing process of my interpretative acts, I could disclose a variety of possible meanings and deepen my understanding of the children's world. In this sense, every form of understanding cannot be regarded as the final one. Rather it should be counted as 'an' understanding which is always open to another new understanding. Thus the act of understanding has always temporality and never-endingness.

When I am closing this study with 'an' understanding of children's lived world in going to school, this understanding is inevitably open to another new understanding. However, we should not dismiss the importance of 'an' understanding because of its temporality and incompleteness. Without 'an' understanding, we cannot go further into another layer of understanding in our endless efforts to deepen our understanding of the child's world. In this sense, the value of such 'an' understanding lies in its disclosing power by making us sensitive and open to the children's world as a whole. Thus, we should not expect that there can and should be any final understanding of the children's world. But rather we need to regard our understanding of the children's world as an ongoing task in which we always need to re-ask and re-reflect on in our pedagogical lives with children.

B. Reflection on the Place of Children in Education

What is the fundamental aim of our educational efforts? When we are setting up educational objectives, developing curriculum, and actually teaching in the educational setting, what makes all these efforts possible and valuable? Many of us might agree that all these efforts come into being with our hope of enhancing children's lives and happiness. Without this hope, it would be impossible for us to put forth such efforts and to find a distinguishable meaning from them. Thus we make an effort so our children will realize the full potential of their being in this world. Then if these efforts can be truly valuable, what should be the place of the children in it? In contemporary educational practice, what place is given to them?

As I have reflected earlier, children's lives in the classroom tended to be dominated by external givens and objectively pre-determined requirements. The materials and content of their activities and the evaluative criteria were pre-determined and standardized by the teacher, and the children were required to accept this. Little opportunity for human relationships with personal involvement between the teacher and the child, as well as among children themselves, was allowed. In this practice, children's inner feelings and perceptions tended to be ignored and distorted under externally imposed values and standards.

Within these classroom cultures, the children's needs and voices tended to be overlooked and negated. They were

regarded merely as passive receptacles who needed to be filled with objectively given knowledge. There was little space for children to speak their true voices and express their own needs. Moreover, there was another dimension of external imposition from the dominant cultural pattern for culturally minority children, including Korean children, as exemplified by Sam's experiences at Halloween. For them, even the excitement of waiting and enjoying their cultural celebrations, which other majority children had, could not be part of their lives. Rather, they had to experience meaninglessness and isolation.

Here, what we need to question is the prevailing expectations or general attitudes toward children. In the prevailing educational practice, the children tended to be taught those things which were pre-determined, structured, and planned by the teacher. The children were required to follow a variety of rules and regulations which tended to be separated from their own meanings and interests. One of the main tasks of the teacher was to supervise and regulate the children's behaviors. The rules were based on the taken-for-granted belief that the children's free actions were not acceptable and would not match the standardized criteria. What makes these educational practices possible? What view of children underlie these practices?

One possible preoccupation underlying this practice could be the passive or negative view of children such that they do not know anything about the world and thus need to

be trained and regulated by adults who are believed to be more knowledgable, philosophical, and moral. But, are these assumptions true? Are children naturally immoral and thus do they need to be controlled by external force? We, as adults, seem to feel that we need to be controlled by external forces such as laws and rules. Without these, we might feel insecure and threatened. But do children really feel uncomfortable and insecure if they don't have such rules and regulations. Is it possible that we are teaching them the necessity of external control in our lives by leading them into the world of rules and regulations? Otherwise, they would not yet know about the world of external control. As can be exemplified by King's (1983) study on the children's conceptions about work and play, children do not understand the dichotomization between work and play or honest and dishonest, before they learn that from adults.

At this moment, I am reminded of a very cold day when my three-year-old daughter surprised me with her genuine concerns of me. When I came back from university, my daughter said, "Mommy, is it too cold outside? I will make you warm." She ran over me and took off my mittens and started to rub my cold cheek and hands with her warm, small hands. Can we say the children are egocentric, immoral, and thoughtless? If we think they are egocentric and thoughtless, maybe we are egocentric (Black, 1980). As Matthews (1980) shows us in his book about the young children's philosophical comments and questions in the daily

life situations, the endless curiosity and explorative questions of the children often make us astonished and bewildered.

However, within the prevailing educational practice, on which I have reflected, many educators do not seem to believe that children can manage their own lives. They believe that adults or teachers have to lead and teach them everything. We would not deny the significance of our cares, worries, and concerns we have for children. They do need help and love from adults. But the point I want to make is we need to reflect on the way we interact with them. In the prevailing educational practice, many rules and routines tend to be given to children in a one-sided manner without much consideration of their interests, capabilities, and potentialities.

When the children are deprived the freedom to speak their own voice and to pursue their own interests, their lived meaning is not integrated into their school life. When they are conceived as no more than raw materials who are ready to be processed into standardized products, what meanings would they find in themselves, others, and the world? It is in this context that the voice of the Buddha comes to us in a significant way when he said, "Make of yourself a light. Rely on yourself. Do not depend on anyone else" (translated by Jongik Lee, 1977, p. 18).

Buddha believed that the center of our life should be ourselves and that without the self-affirmation and

self-trust, nothing truly meaningful is possible. Without making ourselves a light to enlighten our life, we cannot really become ourselves in a genuinely meaningful sense. When children are required to depend on others, they are not given the opportunity to see their authentic inner light and it is hardly possible for them to pursue life in a truly meaningful way.

Self-love is a prerequisite for love of others. We cannot really think of loving another person until we can love ourselves (Cooper, 1971; Fromm, 1968; Pinar, 1975). When we cannot give significance to ourselves, can life be meaningful and significant? If we believe that education exists for the best benefit of our children, then their needs and concerns should have a priority in the educational world. When educational efforts are based on children's own self-direction and inner callings, their lives become richer and more meaningful. Krisnamurti (1974) says:

> If you are not really free, you can never blossom, you can never be good, there can be no beauty (p. 26).

Considering the significance of the self-centered dimension in self actualization, true learning cannot take place if all of the knowledge and requirements are imposed by others. If learning or knowledge is obtained without lived meaning, it is a piece of information; it is not knowledge which is alive and has meaning in our lives. Dearden (1975) says that,

> Without self-knowledge much in our choices and especially in our relations to others, is not

> determined by us in any relevant sense at all. Large areas of strife between people consist of chain reactions with unintended and unwanted outcomes where no one really determined anything at all, because all were absorbed in immediate reaction and were carried along by passively produced emotions (p. 73).

Dennison (1969) also pointed out that "one of the really damaging myth of education" is that "learning is the result of teaching" (p. 73). His claim can be understood to mean that learning is not something that should and can be given by external imposition; rather it is something that can be gained through the learner's self-directed participation in learning activities. Freire (1970) claimed that "freedom is acquired by conquest, not by the gift" (p. 31).

At this moment, we need to reflect on the freedom of the teacher in order to allow us to widen our understanding of the children's places within the whole context of contemporary educational practice. We often hear teachers' experience that there is a different reality out there in the real classroom and that they need to adjust themselves to that reality. This statement may be a reflection of their feeling of estrangement between their ideal or belief and practice. There may be a need for teachers to reconcile their learned or speculated ideas with their specific classroom situations. It seems that, in a more fundamental sense, teachers' autonomy and freedom tend to be lost within the huge and impersonalized institution of schooling.

In this situation, the place of the teacher can be likened to Pinar's (1984) metaphor of the "postman" as an

individual "delivering the mail, other person's correspondence" (p. 2). What teachers are doing in the classroom is not necessarily their own creation; they may merely be delivering it. teachers may also play designated roles, like puppets, in a school system which is "too large, too standardized, necessarily too regimented" (Pinar, 1984, p.1). Pinar claims that "such routinization brings loss of individuality, and without being an individual himself he cannot treat his students individually" (p. 3). If teachers cannot keep their own autonomous individuality, how can we expect them to cultivate the autonomy of the children? Then, who has the autonomy in our educational efforts? In the contemporary educational practice, not only children but also teachers do not seem to have their own place in their educatioal activities.

C. Toward an Education for Children

Listen to the sounds a child makes,
the spoken pleas, the silent messages,
It is the child we teach,
Not the content, the morals, the skills.

Listen for the child who needs to be seen.
He needs to be known as unique,
Not just another one of the group.
The message may come
As a flurry of temper,
A shouted word,
A carefully spoken question,
Or a soft intent look (Burgette, 1976).

There is a tension between a mother and her young daughter. Early in the morning, when each of them is leaving for workplace and school, the child insists on tying her shoes laces by herself. But, the mother thinks she does not have the time to wait until her daughter can finish the task by herself. The mother also does not feel comfortable just standing and watching her daughter's clumsy and unskillful hands tying the shoes laces. At this moment, the mother can decide to wait for her child to tie her shoes by herself, although it takes more time and does not look nice, or she can interrupt the child's trial and do it for herself quickly and neatly.

One simple and ordinary life situation like above seems to lead us into a fundamental issue in educating our children at home as well as at school. We often do not trust our children's inner powers to learn the necessary skills, knowledge, values by themselves. Instead we tend to teach them based on our adult framework and standards. When the children do not meet the externally given standards, they are regarded as failure. We believe that something is wrong with the children and we attempt to direct them into our frame of reference or send them to experts who are said to have the appropriate theoretical knowledge and professional skill to deal with the problem. We do not seem to be tolerant of the way our children learn through their own inner power and process of growth.

As parents, we often try to teach our children to become independent by putting them in a separate room before they realize on their own why they need to sleep and do things by themselves. Separation tends to be imposed on children before they can understand the meaning and place of independence for their life. We often direct children to clean things up before they appreciate the real value of cleanliness or orderliness. We do not seem to really wait until the children can learn by themselves the true meaning of regularity or orderliness in our life, as we might be easily tempted to tie the little girl's shoes laces with our skillful and hasty hands. We often set up a certain time when the children are required to go to bed at night or to take a nap without much consideration of their state of physical tiredness or psychological needs at the moment.

At school, as we have seen in the children's classroom lives, many aspects of their lives were dominated by external forces and criteria. For example, they were not allowed to adjust the time schedule to match their own needs and had very little decision making power. The teacher directed the children's activities according to an impersonally and totally regularized time schedule. The schedule was one-sided in that the teachers allowed little opportunity for the children to learn about the true meaning of time through their real experience in and with the time. For the teachers, there seemed to be no room to tolerate, wait, and encourage the children to understand the meaning

of time and to attempt to manage time by themselves. The children also tended to be directed into a uniformized way of performing their school activities which required the standardized use of materials and specific procedures. Thus the children tended to evaluate their work in terms of the standards objectified by the teacher and which were apart from their own interests and values. For example, they had to color a bear brown and Santa Claus' hat red. In these situations, children's clumsy and preconventional way of accomplishing their work could neither be respected nor significant. Both teachers tended to control the children by putting them in straight lines when they were outside of the classroom, because they were worried about the chaotic and disordered movements of children.

However, what we should not overlook here is the educational value and significance of the little girl's clumsy efforts and struggling process to learn how to tie the shoes laces and of the children's intentions to manage their own time and work. Contemporary educational practice tends to ignore that the children need to go through an unrefined and awkward process before they become more mature and skillful. Before they walk, children have to experience crawling and standing. Without having such experience, they would hardly be able to walk. Moreover, we cannot force them to walk when they are just learning to crawl. If we do, they will fall down. Likewise children need to go through exploratory and awkward experiences in order to become

grown-up and stand on their own in the world. It is the experience of blunder and mistakes what makes growing-up possible in a meaningful sense. It is in this sense that Rousseau's words, "don't save time, but lose it" comes to us in a meaningful way.

Of course, it may be inappropriate or even wrong to deny the importance of our responsibility for our children in terms of educational practice. Because of the significance of our children's needs and voices, our responsibility for leading and guiding them toward a meaningful and valuable life cannot be trivialized and disregarded. In a fundamental sense, we, as adults, have richer and wider experiences in the world, and, therefore, we need to open our children's mind into what could be more meaningful and valuable way of living, based on our own experiences. The classroom teachers must have their own beliefs based on their experiences to guide the children. The educational situation should be different from the situation of playground where there is less directly intended guidance and teaching. When small children go into deep water because they want to, we cannot just sit and watch whatever they are doing. Moreover, the children themselves recognize the value of the adult's rich experiences and also come to us and ask help and advice.

However, the question is; what is our place in helping children realize their higher potential of being in the world? How can we really help our children as educators? Van

Manen (1984) says:

> There is a dimension to pedagogic competence which transcends the techne of teaching. This is what I would call "pedagogic tact," or "tactfulness." Tact is the sensitivity or sensitiveness to a situation that enables me to do pedagogically the right thing for a child. The idea of tact reintroduces the ethical aspects of pedagogic actions (something Aristotle termed practical wisdom). Tact is at work when we see a mother, father, teacher, or other persons, say or do just the right thing with respect to a youngster (p. 2).

Every pedagogical moment, in its primordial sense, can be seen as unique and situational, depending on the child, the historical moment, and a variety of other conditions. So our act of educating cannot be the technical application of the general principles, theory, or our own beliefs about the education. We need to be sensitive and thoughtful to each unique situation in order to do more appropriate things for children. At this moment, "the first pedagogic question always is, or should be, what is the situation like for the child? How does the young person experience this situation? Because no matter how self-righteous or well-meaning any of us could ever be as pedagogues, there is always the question of what it is like for the young person and how our actions have meaning and consquences in the child's growing-up" (Van Manen, 1984, p. 11).

Through living in those pedagogical moments with thoughtful and tactful sensitiveness to each unique pedagogical moment, we also come to transform ourselves as pedagogues. Van Manen (1984) terms this transformation as "thoughtful learning." He wrote:

> The distinctive feature of thoughtful learning is that it manifests itself in a certain depth of perceptiveness or discernment, signifying a transforming quality. Thoughtful learning does not only change what I know but what I *am*. Thoughtful learning transforms my being by making me more attentively aware of the meaning and significance of unique aspects of pedagogic situations in which I find myself as teacher, parent, psychologist, administrator, and so forth (p.3).

In locating our actions as educators within each child's unique needs and meanings and then transforming ourselves, we become more attentively aware of the proper place of our educational responsibility.

This fundamental place of our educational responsibility was insightfully envisaged by *Lao Tzu* with the concept of *wu-wei*, when he wrote:

> ...Thus, the wise man deals with things through *wu-wei* and teaches through no words.
> The ten thousands things flourish without interruption.
> They grow up by themselves, and no one possesses them. (chapter 2)
>
> The highest attainment is *wu-wei* and is purposeless (*wei*). (chapter 38)
>
> When *wu-wei* is done, nothing is left undone. (chapter 48)

Wu-wei, "action of nonaction" (Roy, 1985, p.73), or 'doing everything without doing anything,' which is the central paradox of Taoism, seems to allow us to see the true mode of education. In the way that we do no action by action, but we are always there and alive in the children's minds, wherein the true meaning of education exists. We do not say "do this" and "do that," but we always watch their actions and listen to their voices with understanding, sympathy, and

acceptance. We persistently wait with our wholehearted love until they blossom by themselves. Then, they will come to fully flourish without being possessed by anyone. "This teaching which is a non-teaching" (Steffney, 1981, p. 46) seems to be a way we need to pursue.

In our efforts to find a true pedagogical place in the children's lives, however, we may inescapably encounter the social reality of contemporary age, where education tends to exist for the smooth maintenance of the existing society, and thus the individual child's needs and meaning tend to be overlooked and negated under the totalization function of education. If a child failed to learn the proper behavioral patterns at a certain life phase, s/he would be readily labelled as hyperactive, disruptive, disordered, or learning disabled. In order to survive in contemporary society, children need to meet certain normalized criteria. However, these criteria, whatever they may be, should not overshadow the needs of the individual. Because of our present socio-historical situation, we need to ask, more seriously than any other times in human history: Do children exist for education, or does education exist for the children? What are we really educating our children for?

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